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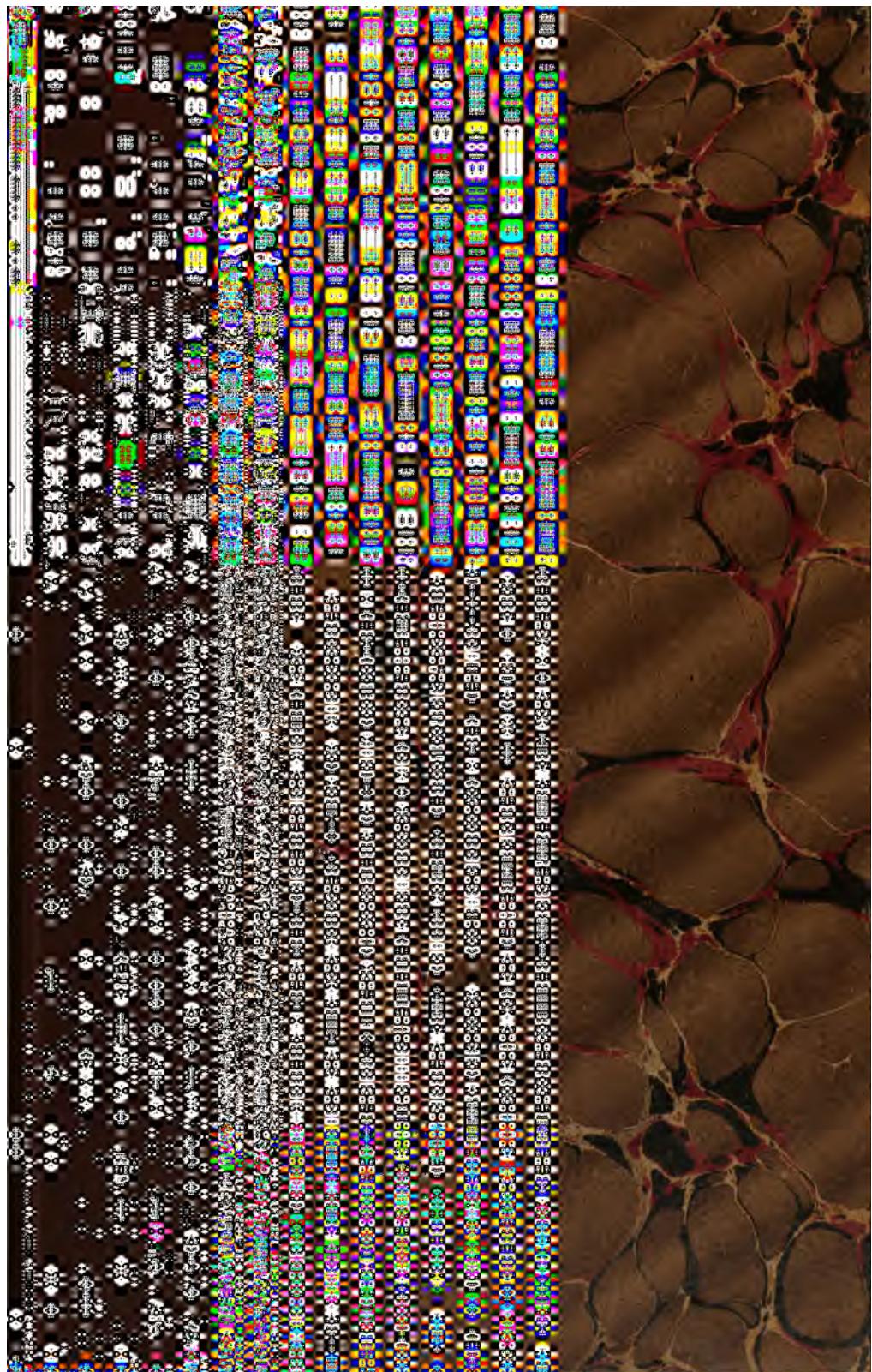
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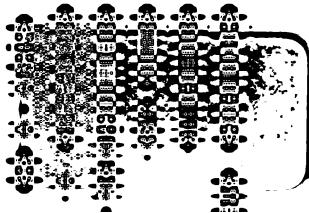
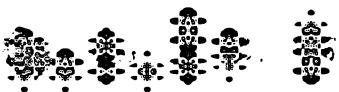
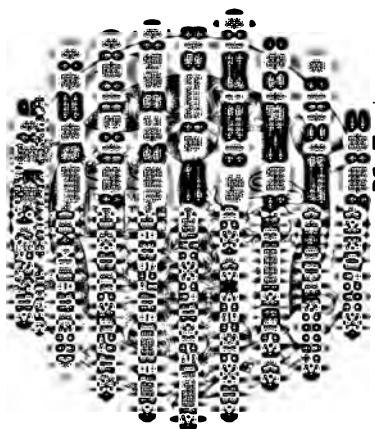
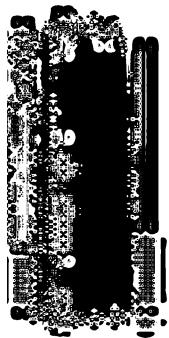
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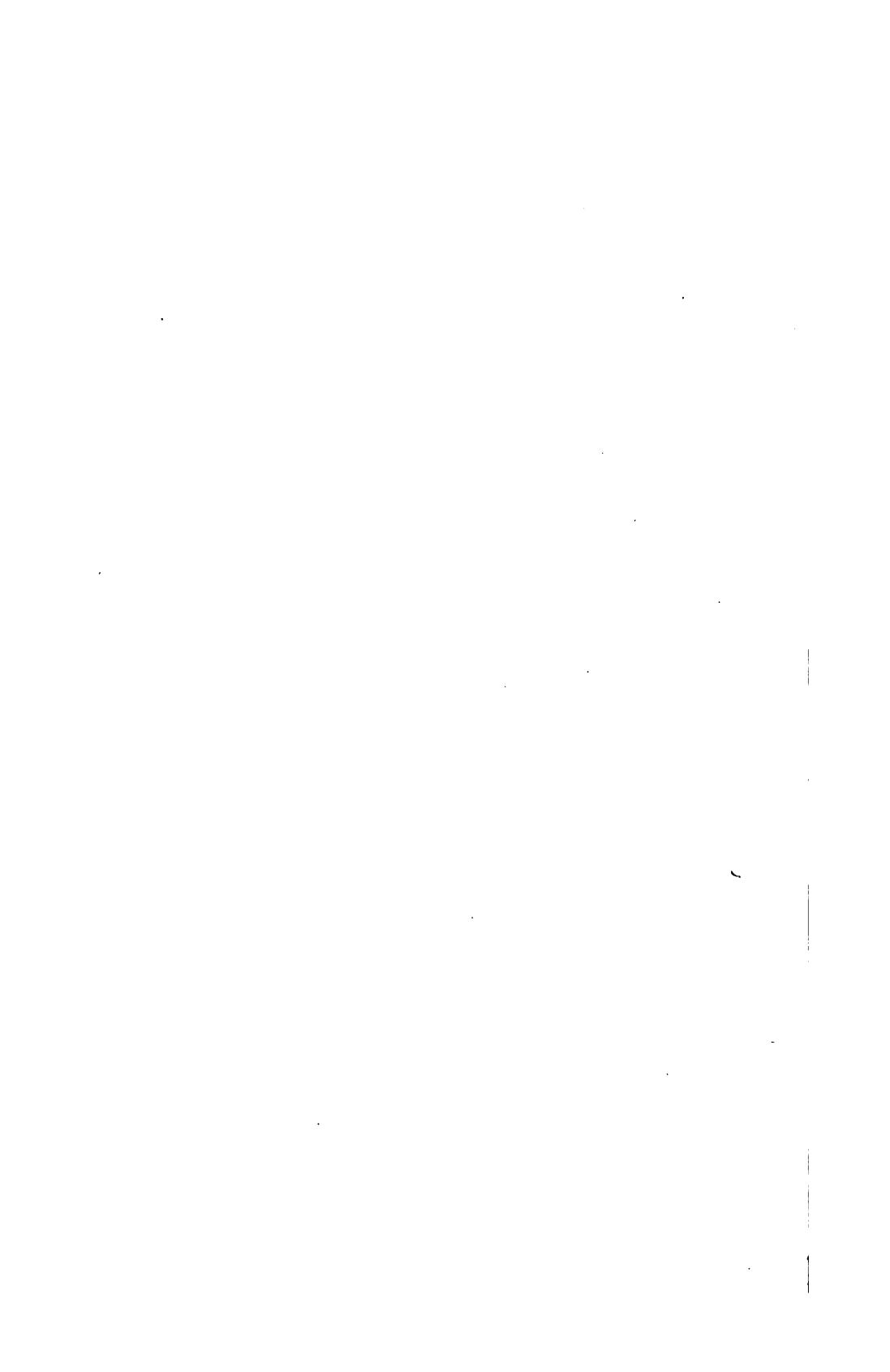
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THREE  
PHILOLOGICAL ESSAYS,

CHIEFLY TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

OF

*JOHN CHRISTOPHER ADELUNG;*

AULIC COUNSELLOR AND FIRST LIBRARIAN TO THE ELECTOR OF SAXONY.

BY

A. F. M. WILLICH, M. D.

—  
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To

His most esteemed and most valuable Friend,

THOMAS HOPKIRK, Esq. of Glasgow;

These Essays

are

Respectfully Inscribed,

by

THE TRANSLATOR.



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## ESSAY FIRST.

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*A concise history of the English Language, &c.*

THE history of the English Language begins with the *Anglo-Saxons*; for, though the old *Britons*, the Ancestors of the modern *Welsh*, were the first inhabitants of this country, yet, with respect to its language, they form no epoch in the history of it; as there are but a very small number of words, which can be derived, with certainty and just etymology, from British roots.

It is, indeed, not very probable that the *Anglo-Saxons*, with their irruption into a new country, should have destroyed, or expelled, all the former inhabitants of it; and it is more reasonable to suppose, that besides those, who fled to the mountains of *Wales*, there must still have remained behind a very considerable part of the nation, but who, according to the barbarous custom prevailing in those times, were reduced to a species of slavery, were obliged to cultivate the fields of their masters, and were gradually compelled, however unwilling, to adopt the language of their conquerors.

Thus, the ancient tongue of the *Britons*, was completely eradicated; if we except a few single words, which have still remained current among country-people.—Similar phenomena have occurred in *Germany*, and frequently too, in other countries. When the *Sclavi* and the *Vandals* made themselves masters of the Eastern part of *Germany*, they did not destroy all the

native

native Germans ; but they subjugated and forced them to adopt *their* language. Hence, in Bohemia, there is scarcely any trace left of the ancient language of the country. When the Germans, in succeeding ages, reconquered many of these provinces, and united them into a political body, they proceeded in a similar manner ; and it is now very difficult to detect any vestiges of the ancient language of the Vandals, among the country-people of these provinces.

The Anglo-Saxons, who began their irruptions into Britain about the year 450, came from the modern *Frisia* : hence their language bears a closer relation to the *Frishan*, than to any other. It is, however, to be much regretted, that the latter has not been more accurately investigated hitherto by any philologist ; for it certainly might be of great advantage for the illustration of the ancient *Anglo-Saxon*.

The history of the English language, from the first inroads of the Anglo-Saxons, down to the present time, comprehends a period of nearly fourteen centuries. As the nation, during this long period, has undergone various great changes and commotions, which were necessarily attended with relative influence upon the language, it becomes therefore necessary to divide it into certain periodical Sections, corresponding with these changes. I propose to adopt this method ; although JOHNSON, my predecessor, has contented himself with giving promiscuous specimens of language, as prefixed to his large Dictionary, in chronological order, without however attempting a true historical division.

The

The principal changes, which, posterior to the Anglo-Saxons, affected the English language, were, the incursions of the Danes; the invasion of the Normans; and the adoption of French phrases and terms, together with the improvements and manners of that people. These collectively suggest to us *four* periods, in tracing the history of the English language: viz. 1st, the *pure Anglo-Saxon*, or the British-Saxon period; 2d. the *Danish Saxon*, or Danish Anglo-Saxon; 3d. the *Normannic-Saxon*, or the Normannic Danish-Saxon; and 4th, the *French-Saxon*, or the Normannic French-Saxon period, in which last the language gradually assumed the form of the *modern English*.

### I. BRITISH-SAXON PERIOD.

This period begins with the first invasion of the *Anglo-Saxons*, in the year 450; it terminates with the incursions of the *Danes*, about the year 780, and consequently comprehends an era of 330 years.—It corresponds with that period in the history of the German language, which extends from the emigration of the Eastern nations, to the reign of CHARLEMAGNE; and with respect to the state of improvement during this period, both languages perfectly resemble one another.

The *Anglo-Saxons* were a rude, untutored people, not unlike all the German and Northern nations of that age, whose principal improvements related to the art of war. People of this description do not stand in need of letters, or a written language; and it is very probable, that they neither had, nor

knew, the alphabet. The increase of population, in a limited territory, compelled them, indeed, early to accustom themselves to order and a more rigid civil constitution; but as they were employed, for a considerable time, in combating the natives of conquered countries, this faint improvement was chiefly, and proximately, designed for warlike pursuits.

A more remarkable degree of improvement was manifest among the Anglo-Saxons about the year 570, when St AUGUSTINE arrived from Rome, and instructed them in the beneficent principles of the Christian Religion. These were the more eagerly embraced, as the progress of the mind, though hitherto small and partial, enabled them to perceive the necessity of abolishing that rude and undigested veneration for their idols, which were calculated only to amuse the fancy of a barbarous and unsettled people.

Together with the Christian Religion, the Anglo-Saxons also acquired the first rudiments of the arts and sciences, and a taste for the literature of ancient Rome, which very rapidly spread among them. This may be easily accounted for, as it was chiefly promoted by the continual increase of a numerous people, who had established themselves upon a limited territory. Thus prepared, they likewise adopted the Roman alphabet, which had already been introduced as the current small letter in their writings. But as they were accustomed to a *sound* in their language, which was expressed with a hissing tone, somewhat similar to both *t* and *s*, and which was foreign to the Romans, who had no character for it in their

alphabet;

alphabet ; hence the Anglo-Saxon teachers of Religion were obliged to borrow the *θ* (theta) from the Greek, which therefore supplied the place of the modern English *th*. The other Anglo-Saxon characters are perfectly similar to the Roman current letters of those times, and particularly of the fifth Century ; and the *w* of the former is closely imitated from a compounded *v* of the latter.

If full credit be due to WARTON, there is no fragment extant from this period, but a small metric composition of the *genuine CAEDMON*, which is inserted in ALFRED's translation of the Ecclesiastic History, by BEDE \*.—As the only, and certainly a venerable piece of curiosity left of these remote ages, it well deserves a place in this period of the British language. It is here offered in two different copies. One of them is transcribed from HICKES's *Grammat. Anglo-Saxon.* p. 187 ; the other still more ancient, is extracted from WANLEY's *Antiq. Literat. Septentr.* Part II. p. 287—I have met with a third Copy of this fragment in " WHELOCK's *Anglo-Saxon BEDE* ; Cambridge, 1643 ; but the text in this differs from both the former, and does not appear to me equally authentic.

## HICKES.

" Nu we sceolon herigean	" Nu scylun hergan
Heofon rices weard	Hefaen ricaes uard
Metodes mihte.	Metudaes maeſti
And his mod gethanc.	End his mod gidanc
Weorc wuldr faeder	Verc uuldr fadur
Suuia he wundra gehwaes.	Sue he uundra gihuacs.
Ece drihten ord onsteald.	Eci drihtin
He aereſt scop	Ora ſtelidae.

## WANLEY.

He

\* Vol. IV. Chap. 24. (not Chap. 4. as quoted by WARTON).

x THREE PHILOLOGICAL

Eordan bearnum

Heofan to rofē

Hādg scippend.

Da middangeard

Moncynnes weard

Ece drihte aefter teode,

Firum foldan.

Frea aelmihtig."

He aerist scopa

Elda barnum

Heben til hrofē

Haleg scepen,

Tha middun geard

Moncynnaes uard

Ecy dryftin

Aefter tiadae

Firum foldu

Frea almächtig.

*English.*

“ Now we ought to praise the author of the celestial empire, the might of the creator, and his counsels, the deeds of the father of honour ; how ne became the author of wonders.

And when the eternal God first created heaven as the roof for the children of man, and afterwards the earth, being an omnipotent guardian of the human race.”

*German.*

“ Nun sollen wir preisen, den Urheber des Himmelreiches, die Macht des Schöpfers, und seinen Rath, die Thaten des Vaters der Ehre ; wie er der Urheber der Wunder ward.

Und als der ewige Gott den Menschenkindern zuerst den Himmel zum Dache, und hernach als allmächtiger Hüter des menschlichen Geschlechts die Erde schuf.

Although CAEDMON is said to have miraculously composed this Song, when dreaming ; it nevertheless appears to be a translation from the Latin, which then, and for several succeeding centuries, was rendered so very literally, that even the article was left out, and the whole construction of the Latin with the participles and many other peculiarities were rigorously observed. It is for this reason, we ought not to judge of the spirit of a language from the like translations ; and the want of rhymes is very probably owing to the same cause.

## II. DANISH SAXON-PERIOD.

(or, *Danish Anglo-Saxon.*)

This period begins from the incursions of the Danes, about the year 780, and continues as far as the invasion of the Normans in 1066; it consequently includes nearly three centuries. Two circumstances co-operated here, which produced remarkable changes in the Old Saxon language; namely first, the domestic improvements of the Anglo-Saxons, both in a physical and moral sense, from which the improvement, and consequently the change of the language was inseparable; and secondly, the mixture of the latter with the Danish, which being closely related to the Anglo-Saxon, was more easily united into *one* language.

Many written fragments, from this period, are still extant; and all such as are commonly called Anglo-Saxon, properly consist of a mixture of Danish with the Anglo-Saxon. To this number we may particularly refer two literal translations of the four Evangelists, the writings of King ALFRED, and the beautiful poetical paraphrase of the *First Book of Moses*, by the *spurious* CAEDMON.

As a specimen of the prose-language of this period, JOHNSON gives the first Chapter of St LUKE, extracted from one of the translations above mentioned; but as such literal translations are by no means calculated to exhibit the spirit of a language, I have made choice of the Travels of OHOTHER and WULFSTAN, as King ALFRED, who died in 901, described them in his Pre-  
face

ii THREE PHILOLOGICAL

face to the translation of Orosius.—I have faithfully transcribed it from *Spelman's Vita Aelfredi*; Oxford, Fol. 1678; with this difference only, that instead of giving the (very inaccurate) Latin of SPELMAN, I have subjoined a German translation; and for the greater convenience of readers, in general, I have likewise exchanged the Anglo-Saxon for the common Latin characters.

This original piece, on account of the many curious particulars it contains, I make no doubt, will prove more acceptable than any of those which are bare literal translations, and consequently improper to serve as specimens for displaying the genius of the language.

Ohthaere saede his hlaforde  
Aelfrede de Kyninge thaet he  
ealra Northmanna Northmest  
bude; he cwaeth thaet he bude  
on thaem lande northweardum  
with tha waest sae. he saede theah  
thaet thaet land sy swithe north  
thanon' ac hit is eall weste bu-  
ton on feawum stowum' stice  
maelum wiciath Finnas' on hun-  
tatthe on wintra' and on sumera'  
on fiscothe be thaere sae.

ORTHER said to his lord,  
King ALFRED, that of all the  
Normans he resided the farthest  
towards the North; he affirmed  
that he resided in that coun-  
try which, in the North, borders  
on the Western Ocean. This  
country extends far to the North,  
is a complete desert, excepting  
a few places which are inhab-  
ited by the Finns, who live in  
winter by the chase, but in sum-  
mer by fishing.

He

He

ORTHER sagte zu seinem Herrn, dem Koenige AELFRID, dass er unter allen Normannen am weitesten gegen Norden wohne; er sagte, er wohne in dem Lande, welches nordwaerts in die Westsee stoesst. Dieses Land erstrecke sich weit gegen Mitternacht, und sey voellig wuist, bis auf einige wenige Orte, wo einige Finnen wohnen, welche im Winter von der Jagd, im Sommer aber von dem Fischfangen leben.

Er

He saede thaet he aet sumum cyrre wolde fandian hu lange thaet land north rihte laege· oth the hwaether aenig man benortham thaem westene bude: tha for he north rihte be thaem lande· let him ealne weg thaet weste lande on thaet steorbord· and tha wid sae on baec bord thry dagas· tha wes he swa feor north swa swa hwael hundan syrrest farath: tha for he tha gyt north ryhte· swa he mihte on thaem othrum thrim dagum geseglian· tha beah thaet land wer eart rihte· oth the sio sae in on thaet land· he nyste hwaether· buton he wyste thet he ther bad westan windes oth the hwon northan· and segled thanon east be lande· swa swa he mihte on feowor dagum geseglian· thasceolde he bidan ryhte northan windes· forthan thaet land thaer beah suthrihte· oth the seo sae in onwaet land· he nyste hwaether· tha saegled he thanon suthrihte be lande· swa

b

not.

Er sagte, er habe einmal untersuchen wollen, wie weit sich dieses Land nach Norden erstreckte; oder ob noch Menschen im Norden dieser Wüste wohneten. Deswegen sey er drey Tage lang gerade nordwaerts gereiset, habe das wüste Land zur rechten, und die offene See auf der linken Hand gehabt; da er denn bis dahin nordwaerts gekommen sey, wohin die Wallfischjaeger zu gehen pflegten. Von da sey er noch drey Tage lang weiter nordwaerts gesegelt, da sich denn das Land gerade nach Osten gestreckt habe. Ob aber innerhalb des Landes Meer sey, wisse er nicht; er wisse nur so viel, daß er sich daselbst aufgehalten, und auf den West- oder Nordwind gewartet habe. Hierauf sey er vier Tage lang an den Lande hingegelgt, worauf er auf den Nordwind habe warten müssen, weil sich das Land nach Südien gestreckt habe. Ob sich die See in dieses Land erstrecke, wisse er nicht.

Hierauf

He related, that he had once wished to examine, how far this country extended to the North; or whether this desert was inhabited in its northern parts. For this purpose he had sailed three successive days in a straight northern line, having the desert country on the right, and the open sea on the left hand; thus he had come to that northern region, to which the whale-fishers were accustomed to resort. From thence he had sailed, for three days, further North, where he found the country extending due East. But whether the sea continue within the land, he knew not; he only knew this much, that he had stopped there, waiting for westerly or northerly winds. After this he sailed four days along the coast, when he was again obliged to wait for a northerly wind, as the country extended to the South. Whether the sea continue within this part of the land, he also knew

swa he mihte on fif dagum geseglian::

Tha laeg thaer an micel ea up in that land· wa cyrdon he up in on tha ea· for thaem hy ne thorston forth be thaere ea seglian· for unfrithe· for thaem thaet land waes eall gebun on othre healfe thaere ea· Ne mette he aer nan gebun land· syfthan he fram his agnum hame for· ac him waes ealne weg west land on thaet steorbord butan fisceran and fugeleran and hundtan· and thaet waeren ealle Finnas· and him waes a Widsae on thaet baec bord·

Tha Beormas haefdon swithe well gebun hyra land· ac hi ne dorston thaew on cuman·: Ac thara Terfin na land thaes eall weste· butan waer hundtan gewicdon· oththe fisceras· oththe fugeleras

not. Then he sailed five additional days along the Southern coast.

Here he met with a great river that extended far up the country, and on the mouth of which he stopped, but for fear of the inhabitants, he did not venture to sail up that river; for the country, on one bank of the river, appeared fully inhabited. He had met with no other inhabited country than this since his departure from home: the country on the right always appearing a desert uninhabited, except by a few fishermen, fowlers and hunters, who were all of *Finnic* extraction. But on the left, he always observed the open sea,

Many *Biarmians* resided among them; yet he was not inclined to venture a landing there. But the country of the *Terfins* was uninhabited, except by some hunters, fishermen or fowlers

Hierauf sey er fuinf Tage lang laengs der Kuijste suidwaerts gefegelt.

Da befand sich ein großer Fluss, welcher weit in das Land ging, an dessen Mündung er sich aufhielt, sich aber aus Furcht vor den Einwohnern nicht den Fluss hinauf wagte; weil das Land auf der andern Seite des Flusses stark bewohnt war. Er hatte auch, seitdem er aus seiner Heimath abgereiset war, außer diesem kein bewohntes Land angetroffen, sondern hatte zur Rechten jederzeit wüstes Land gehabt, einige wenige Fischer, Vogelfaenger und Jaeger ausgenommen, welche insgesammt Finnen waren. Zur Linken aber hätte er jederzeit das offene Meer.

Es wohnten viele *Biarmier* in ihrem Lande; allein er habe es nicht wagen wollen, dafelbst anzulanden. Das Land der *Terfinnen* aber sey unbewohnt, außer dass

fugeleras :. Fela spella him sae-  
don tha Beormas' aegther ge of  
hyra agenum lande ge of thaem  
lande the ymbe hy utan waeran.  
ac he nyfste hwat thaes sothes  
waes' for thaem he hit sylf ne  
geseah :. Tha Finnas him thuhte  
and tha Beormas spraecon neah  
angetheode :.

Swithost he for thider to  
eacan thaes landes sceawunge:  
for thaem horswaclum: for thaem  
hi habbath swithe aethele ban on  
hyra tothum :. Tha tew hy  
brohton sume thaem cynincge:  
and hyra hyd bith swithe god to  
sciprathum :. Se hwael bith  
micle laessa than othre hwalas:  
ne bith he lengra thonne syfan  
elna lange: ac on his agnum  
lande isse bedsta hwael huntuth.  
tha beth eachta and fewertiges  
elna lange: and tha maeftan  
fifiges elna langr: thara he saede  
thaet

fowlers who resided there.  
The Biarmians told him much  
of their own country, as well  
as of the neighbouring lands;  
but how far their narratives  
were true, he could not ascer-  
tain, as he had not himself seen  
these countries. He believed,  
however, that the FINNS and  
BIARMIANS had ONE common lan-  
guage.

His principal object in tra-  
velling thither had been, to ob-  
tain the sea-horses, whose teeth  
were composed of a very preci-  
ous bone, and some of which  
teeth he likewise gave to the  
King. Their skins are of ex-  
cellent use for tackle. This  
species of whale is much smaller  
than any other, being never a-  
bove seven ells in length. But  
good whales were also caught  
in his native country, which  
measured upwards of forty-eight  
yards, and sometimes above fifty

b 2

yards

dass einige Jaeger, Fischer, oder Vogelfaenger daselbst wolinten. Die Biarmier haetten ihm vieles, so wohl von ihrem eigenen Lande als von den benachbarten Laendern erzaehlet; allein er wisse nicht was daran wahr sey, weil er sie selbst nicht gesehen habe. Er glaubte indeffen, dass die FINNEN und BIARMIER EINE und eben diefelbe Sprache haetten.

Er sey aber vornehmlich um der Wallrosse willen dahin gereiset, welche ein sehr schaetzbare Bein in ihren Zahnen haetten, von welchen Zähnen er auch einige dem Koenige gab. Jhre Felle sind sehr gut zu Schiffstauen zu gebrauchen. Diese Art Wallfische ist weit kleiner als andere Arten, und nicht ueber sieben Ehlen lang. Es wurden aber auch in seinem Vaterlande gute Wallfische gefangen, welche ueber acht und vierzig, und zuweilen ueber funfzig Ehlen lang waerent.

Ex

thaet he syxa sum ofsloge syxtig  
on twam dagum.

He waes swithe spaedig man  
on thaem aethum the hoera spe-  
da on beoth· that is on wildrum ·  
He haefde thagyt· tha hethone  
cyning sohte· tamra deora unhe-  
bohra syx hund ·· Tha theor he  
hatad hranas ·· wara waeron six  
staet hranas· Tha beoth swithe  
dyre mid Finnūm· fot thaem hy-  
fot tha wildan hranas mid ··  
He waes mid thaem fyrstum  
mannum on thaem lande· naefde  
he theah mathonne twentig hry-  
thera· and twentig sceapa· and  
twentig swina· and thaet lytle  
thaet he erede he erede mid  
horsan ·· Ac hyra ar is maest on  
thaem gafole the tha Finnas him  
gildath· thaet gafol bithon deora  
fellum· and on fugela fetherum·  
and hwales bane· and on thaem  
sciprapum

yards in length. He affirmed,  
that he was the sixth among  
those (i. e. in company with five  
others) who had killed sixty  
whales in two days.

He was a very rich man in  
those things which, with them,  
were esteemed as riches, that is,  
in cattle. He had, when he  
came to the King, six hundred,  
unpurchased, tame deer, which  
he called rein-deer. Among  
these were six highly esteemed  
by the *Finn*s, as by means of  
them they tamed the wild rein-  
deer. He was one of the Chiefs  
in the land, and yet he was pos-  
sessed of no more than twenty  
oxen, twenty sheep, and twenty  
hogs. The small piece of soil,  
which he cultivated, was tilled  
by horses. The principal re-  
venues (of the Chiefs) consisted  
in the tribute which the *Finn*s  
paid them, viz. in skins of ani-  
mals, bird-feathers, whale-bone  
and

Er versicherte, dass er selb sechste (d. i. mit noch fuinfen) ihrer in zwey Tagen  
fechzig erloget habe.

Er war ein sehr reicher Mann an solchen Dingen, welche bey ihnen fuir  
Reichthum gehalten werden, d. i. an Vieh. Er hatte, als er zu dem Koenige kam,  
schlaendert ungekaufte zahme Hirsche, welche er Rennthiere nannte. Darunter  
befanden sich sechs, welche bey den *Finn*en sehr hoch geschaetzt werden,  
weil sie die wilden Rennthiere damit zahm machen. Er war einer der Vor-  
nehmensten in dem Lande, und hatte dennoch nicht mehr als zwanzig Ochsen, zwanzig  
Schafe, und zwanzig Schweine. Den wenigen Acker, welchen er bauete,  
den bauete er mit Pferden. Jhre vornehmsten Einkünfte bestehen in dem Tribute,  
welchen die *Finn*en ihnen bezahlen, und welcher in Thierfellen, in Vogelfedern, in  
Fischbein

sciprapum the beoth of hwaeles  
hyde geworht and of seoles :-

Aeghwilc gylt be his gebrydum se birdsta sceall gildan  
fiftyn mearthes fell and fif  
hrances and an beran fel and  
tyn ambra fethra and berenne  
kyrtel oththe yterenne and twe-  
gen sciprapas. aegwer sy syxtig  
elna lang other sy of hwaeles  
hyde geworhte other of sioles :-

\* \* \*

Thaet Eastland (WULFSTAN  
faede

and ship-ropes, which were ma-  
nufactured of the skins of the  
whale and sea-dog (seal).

Every one contributed in pro-  
portion to his abilities. The  
richest generally gave fifteen  
skins of the marret, five of the  
rein-deer, one bear's skin, ten  
measures of feathers, together  
with a coat made of the skins of  
bears or otters, and two ship's-  
cables, each of them sixty eils  
long, one of which must be ma-  
nufactured of whale-skins, and  
the other of the skins of seals.

\* \* \*  
This Eastern country † (WULF-  
STAN

Fischbein, und in Schiffsseilen bestehet, welche letztere aus Wallfisch-und See-  
hundsfellen verfertiget werden.

Jeder giebt nach seinem Vermoegen. Der Reichste giebt gemeinlich funf-  
zehn Marderfelle, fuinf Rennthiere, ein Baerenfell, und zehn Maafs Federn, nebst  
einem Rocke von Baehren-oder Fischotterfellen, und zweyen Schiffsseilen, jedes  
sechzig Ehlen lang, deren eines aus Wallfisch—das andere aber aus Seehundfellen  
verfertiget seyn muß.

Dieses Oestliche Land (erzachlte WULFSTAN) ist fehr grofs, und hat fehr viele  
Staedte

\* \* \* Here follow OHOTHER's and WULFSTAN's *Geographical accounts of Norway*, the adjacent countries to the East, and the river *Vistula*. They are, however, so inaccurately stated, and so little interesting in themselves, that I thought proper to save the room for other more curious and attractive specimens. I have selected a few of that description from the works of CAXTON, HARDING, WARTON, &c. which appeared to me better calculated, to exhibit the *true* state and progress of the English language, especially during the *third* and *fourth* periodical divisions, here adopted.

† Speaking last of the *Vistula*, the *Ilfing* (modern *Elbing*) the *Eastbian Lake* (modern *Frisch Haff*) and the adjacent country to the East; WULFSTAN relates these curious facts concerning the different provinces, now inhabited by the East- and West-Prussians, who gained the victories of FREDERIC II. W.

faede) is swithe mycel and thaer bith swithe manig burh and on aelcere byrig bith cyninge and thaer bith swythe micel hunig and fiscath and se cyning and tha ricostan men drincath myran meoc and tha unspeithigan and tha theowan drincath medo : Ther bith swithe mycel gewinn betweonan him and ne bith thaer naenig ealo gebrownen mid Estum ac thaer bith medo genoh :

And thaer is mid Estum theaw thonne thaer bith man dead thaet he lith inne unforbaerned mid his magum and freondum monath gewhilum twegen and tha Cyningas and tha othre heah thungene men swa micel leng swa hi maran speda habbath hwilum healf gear that hi beoth unforbaerned and licgath bufan eoarthan on hyra hufum and ealle tha hwile the thaet lio bith inne thaer sceal beon gedrync and plega oth thone daeg the hi hine for-

baerneth :

STAN related) was very large and contained many cities, each of which had its king. Much honey and many fishes were likewise found there. The King and the richest persons drank horse-milk, but the poor and the servants drank mead. They likewise had much wine, but beer was not brewed among the Eastern inhabitants, instead of which they had plenty of mead.

The Eastern inhabitants had the (singular) custom of keeping the bodies of their deceased friends and relations for a month, sometimes for two months, within their houses ; but the kings and other men of rank were kept longer within the house, in proportion to their riches. Sometimes they were suffered to lie half a year above ground, in their houses, without being burnt. As long as the corps remained there, they feasted and played till the appointed day of burning.

Staedte, deren jede ihren Koenig hat. Auch giebt es daselbst viel Honig und Fische. Der Koenig und die reichsten Personen trinken Pferdemilch, die Armen und Knechte aber trinken Meth. Es giebt auch vielen Wein unter ihnen ; aber Bier wird unter den Ostlaendern nicht gebrauet ; dagegen haben sie Meth genug.

Die Ostlaender haben den (fonderbaren) Gebrauch, dass wenn jemand unter ihnen stirbt, derselbe in dem Hause unter den Freunden und Verwandten einen Monath, zuweilen auch zwey, liegen bleibt ; die Koenige aber und andere vornehme Maenner bleiben desto laenger liegen, je reicher sie sind. Zuweilen liegen sie ein halbes Jahr ueber der Erde in ihren Haeusern unverbrannt. So lange die Leiche so liegt, zechen

baerneth :. Thonne thy ylcan daeg hi hine to thaem ade beran willath. thonne to daelath hi his feoh thaet thaer to lase bith aefter them gedrynce and thaem plegan: on fif oththe syx hwilum on ma: fwa fwa thaes feos andefn bith :. Aleogath hit thonne fore hwaega on anre mile: thone maestan daele fram thaem tune: thonne otherne thonne thaene thiriddan' oththe hyt eal aled bith on thaere anre mile: and sceall beon se laesta dael nyhst thaem tune the se deada man onlith :. Thonne sceolon beon gesamnode calle tha menn the swyftoste hors habbath on thaem lande: for hwaega on fif milum oththe on syx milum fram thaem feo :. Thonne aer- nath hy ealle toward them feo: thonne cymeth se man se thaet Swifte hors hafath to thaem aerestan daele and to thaem maestan: and fwa elc aefter othrum: oth hit bith eall genumen: and

fe

burning. On this day they removed it to the funeral pile; they divided into five, six, or more parts, according to the nature of the property, the goods of the deceased, if any remained, after feasting upon, and playing for them. Then they placed the greatest part of them, at least one mile from the village (of the deceased), then the second, and then the third part, until every thing was placed within that mile. The smallest part was upon this occasion always placed nearest to the village, in which the deceased had lived. This being done, all the men possessed of the swiftest horses, within five or six miles distance from the estate of the deceased, assembled and rode with the greatest speed to the places, where the goods were deposited; so that he who had the swiftest horse arrived first at the best share of the property,

zechen und spielen sie bis zur Verbrennung. An dem Tage aber, da sie ihn auf den Holzstof bringen, theilen sie seine Guiter, so viel nach dem Zechen und Spielen davon noch ubrig ist, in fuinf, oder sechs, oder mehr Theile, nachdem die Guiter beschaffen sind. Dann legen sie den groesten Theil derselben wenigstens eine Meile von dem Dorfe (des Verstorbenen,) dann den zweyten, dann den dritten Theil, bis alles innerhalb dieser Meile gelegt ist. Der kleinste Theil wird dabey allemahl zunaechst an das Dorf gelegt, wo der Verstorbene gewohnet hat. Als dann versammeln sich alle Maenner aus dem Lande, welche die schnellsten Pferde haben, fuinf bis sechs Meilen weit von den Guitern, und remmen sporenstreichs darauf zu; da denn der, welcher das schnellste Pferd hat, zu dem ersten und besten Theil kommt, und so einer

se nimth thone laestan dael.  
 se nihit thaem tune thaet feoh  
 geaerneth· and thonne rideth  
 aelc his weges mid tha feo· and  
 hyt motan habban eall· and for-  
 thy thaer beoth· tha Swifstan  
 hors ungefoge dyre · And thon-  
 ne his gestreon beoth thus eall  
 asped· thonne byrth man hine  
 ut· and forbaerneth mid his  
 waepnum and hraegle und swi-  
 thost ealle his speda hy forspen-  
 dath mid than langan legere  
 thaes deadan mannes inne· and  
 thaes the hy be thaem waegum·  
 alecgath· the tha fremdon to  
 aernath and nimath · And thaet  
 is mid Eastum theaw· thaet thaer  
 sceal aelces getheodes man beon  
 forbaerned· and gyf thar man  
 an ban findeth unforbaerned· hi  
 hit sceolan miclum gebetan ·  
 And thaer is mid Eastum an  
 maeoshi· thaet hi magon cyle  
 gewyrcan· and thy thaer licgath  
 tha deadan men swa lange· and

property, and thus one after  
 another, till the whole was car-  
 ried away. But he who arrived  
 at the lot placed nearest to the  
 village, got the smallest share.  
 Upon this, each of them rode off  
 with his share and kept it whol-  
 ly—as his property.—For this  
 reason, too, swift horses were  
 highly valued among them. Af-  
 ter having thus distributed all  
 his property, they carried out  
 the deceased (into the open air),  
 and burnt him, together with  
 his armour and cloaths. The  
 greatest part of the property was  
 spent in the long keeping of the  
 corps, but whatever was expo-  
 sed on the road, was gained and  
 carried off by strangers. It was  
 a prevailing custom among the  
*Ethians*, to burn their dead;  
 and if afterwards a single bone  
 was found unburnt, such an o-  
 mission was severely punished.  
 The inhabitants of the East were

ne

also

einer nach dem andern bis alles weggenommen ist. Derjenige bekommt aber den  
 kleinsten Theil, der zu dem naechst an dem Dorfe gelegenen Theile gelangt.  
 Als denn reitet ein jeder mit seinem Theile davon, und behaelt ihn ganz—als sein  
 Eigentum.—Dies macht auch, dass die fluechtigen Pferde bey Ihnen uberaus theuer  
 sind. Wenn nun alle Guiter vertheilet sind, alsdann tragen sie den Verstorbenen  
 hinaus (in die freye Luft), und verbrennen ihn mit seinen Waffen und Kleidern.  
 Sein meistes Vermoegen gehtet bey dem langen Auf behalten des Verstorbenen  
 darauf; was aber an dem Wege ausgesetzet ist, wird von Fremden gewonnen und  
 weggenommen. Es ist bey den *Ethien* der Gebrauch, dass jeder Verstorbene ver-  
 brannt wird, und wenn hernach ein einiges Bein unverbrannt gefunden wird, so  
 wird solches scharf gehandet. Die Offlaender haben auch die Kraft, dass sie Kaelte  
 machen

ne fuliath· that hi wyrcaþ thone  
eyle hine on· and theah man  
aſette twegen faetels full ealath  
oþthe waetheres· hy gedoth· that  
other bith ofer froren· sam hit sy  
ſummor am winter.

also acquainted with the art of  
producing cold; hence the corps  
could lie so long without under-  
going putrefaction, because they  
introduced cold (frigorific sub-  
stances) into it. And if two  
vessels filled with beer or water  
were exposed, they could make  
both of them freeze, whether it  
were in summer or winter\*.

ſtachen koenhen; daher auch die Leichen ſo lange liegen und nicht faulen, weil  
man Kaelte (kaltmachende Koerper) in ſie bringet. Und wenn man zwey  
Gefaeſſe voll Bier oder Waſſer hinfetzet, ſo koennen ſie machen, dasſ beyde frieren,  
es fey im Sothmer oder im Winter. c

\* For such readers as may be only imperfectly acquainted with the German language, I beg leave to add the following remarks: 1st. that all Substantives are written with large initials; 2d, that, according to the German idiom, the *present* tense is used, throughout this narrative, instead of the English *imperfect*; 3d. that though a sentence in the German frequently begins with the *imperfect* tense, when introducing the speech of another, (v. g. *Er sagte, er babe, &c.* pag. xiii.) yet by the German idiom, the quotation itself is expressed in the *conjunctive present*;—a peculiarity, which is uniformly observed by ADELUNG himself, whose translation I have here subjoined, with scarcely any alteration; 4th, that the preceding English translation deviates only from the German, where the construction of the former rendered it necessary. Finally; to prove, that the affinity of the German to the *Anglo-Saxon* is much stronger than to the *modern English*, I have here added some examples.

German.	Anglo-Saxon.	English.
Tagen. (pl. dat. of <i>Tag</i> .)	Dagum.	Days, (day)
Gelegelt. (pret. of <i>segeln</i> .)	Gefeglian.	Sailed, (to sail)
Wuſſte. (impf. conj. of <i>wiffen</i> .)	Wuſte.	He might know.
Vogelfanger.	Fugeleran.	Bird-catcher.
Gegeben. (participle of <i>geben</i> .)	Gebun.	Given.
Ihres (pos. pron. neut. of <i>ibr</i> .)	Hyra.	Their.
Eigenes (part of a pos. pron.)	Agenum.	Own.
Hirschen. pl. of <i>Hirsch</i> )	Hryrethera.	Stags (deer).
Zuweilen,	Gewilum.	Sometimes.
Ueberfahren,	Oferferan	To travel (ferry) over.
Unverbrannt (pret. of <i>nicht verbrennen</i> )	Unforbaerned.	Unburnt (not to burn.)
Meistenthells	Macstandaeſ.	For the most part.

And if it be objected, that many of these words likewise bear strong marks of affinity to the *modern English*, I must remind the reader of my aim, which is *not to deny*

In order to give likewise a specimen of poetical composition, I shall substitute for the poem furnished by JOHNSON, another original, which I found in HICKES's *Gramm. Anglo-Saxon.* pag. 178.—Though the age of it be not ascertained, it certainly belongs to this period, and may be considered as a concise

*Topography of the City of Durham.*

Is theos burch breome.	This city is celebrated
Geoнд Breoten rice.	In the whole empire of the Britons.
Steopa gesta tholad.	The road to it is steep,
Stanas ymb utan.	It is surrounded with rocks,
Wundrum gewaexen.	And with curious plants.
Weor ymb cornath.	The <i>Wear</i> flows round it,
En ythum strong.	A river of rapid waves.
And theriane wunath	And there live in it,
Fisca feola kinn.	Fishes of various kinds
On floda gemong.	Mingling with the floods.
And there gewexen.	And there grow
Wuda festern micel.	Great forests;
Wuniath in them wicum	There live in the recesses
Wilda deor monige.	Wild animals of many sorts.
In deopa dalum.	In the deep valleys

Deora

Deer

Diese Stadt ist berühmt.—In dem ganzen Reiche der Britten.—Der Weg zu ihr ist jaeh, —Sie ist mit Felsen umgeben, —Und sonderbaren Gewaechsen.—Die *Wear* unsliest sie, —Ein Fluss von reisenden Wellen.—Und darin wohnen, —Fische vieler Arten—Die sich mit den Fluthen vermischen.—Und daselbst wachsen—Große Wälder; —In den Auen wohnen—Mancherley wilde Thiere.—In den tiefen Thaelern

deny this, but to prove, that contrary to the opinion of many Antiquaries, the German very probably is the mother, and not a sister language of the *Anglo-Saxon.* Hence the manifest absurdity, in Dictionaries, of giving references to either, as two different languages, especially in words whose origin cannot be well ascertained.

W.

Deora ungerim.	Deer innumerable.
Is im there byri.	There is in this city
Eac bearnum gecithed	Also well known to men
De arfesta eadig Cuthberht.	The venerable St Cudberth,
And thes claene cyninges heo- fud.	And the head of the chaste king.
Oswaldes Engla leo	Oswald, the lion of the Angli,
And Aidan bisco	And Aidan, the bishop,
Aedberth and Aedfrid.	Aedbert and Aedfrid
Aethelge geferes	The noble associates.
Is therinne mid heom	There is in it also
Aethelwold biscoep	Aethelwold, the bishop.
And breouna bocera Beda.	And the celebrated writer Bede.
And Boifil abbet.	And the abbot Boifil,
De claene Cuthberht.	By whom the chaste Cudberth
On gichethe lerde lustum.	In his youth was gratis instruc- ted.
And he is lara uuel genom.	Who also well received these instructions.
Eardiath aeth them eadige.	There rest with these Saints,
In in them mynstre.	In the inner part of the minster
Vnarimeda reliqua	Relicks without number,
Thaer monige uundram guuur- thath	Which perform many miracles,
The aurita leggeth	As the Chronicles tell us,
Mid then drihtnes uerdomes	And (which) await with them
bideith.	the judgment of the Lord.

tiefen Thaelern—Unzachlige Rehe, (Thiere).—Es ist in dieser Stadt—Auch den Menschen wohlbekannt—Der ehrwürdige heil. Cudberth,—Und des keuschen Koeniges Haupe.—Oswald, der. Angeln Loewe,—und der Bischof Aidan,—Aedbert und Aedfrid,—Die edlen Gefährten.—Es ist darin mit ihnen,—Der Bischof Aethelwold.—Und der berühmte Schriftsteller Beda.—Und der Abt Boifil,—Der den keuschen Cuthberth—In der Jugend umsonst unterrichtete,—Welcher auch die Lehre sehr gut annahm.—Es ruhen bey diesen Heiligen,—In dem Innern des Muinsters,—Unzachlige Reliquien,— Welche viele Wunder wirken,—Wie die Schriften sagen—Und (welche) mit ihnen das Gericht des Herrn erwarten.

Of this period, we must finally remark, that from the time of **ALFRED**, the old Anglo-Saxon characters were gradually exchanged for the French letters of the Alphabet. There is little doubt, that the nation had already made such progress in taste, or intellectual discernment, as to become sensible of the want of symmetry in the Anglo-Saxon, when compared to the Roman characters ; and that they readily gave the preference to the French letters, in which those of Rome were somewhat more faithfully copied.

INGULF\*, as quoted by SPELMAN in the work above mentioned, expresses himself upon this adoption of foreign characters, in the following lines : “ Manus Saxonica ab omnibus Saxonibus et Merciis usque ad tempora Regis *Aelfredi*, “ qui per Gallicanos Doctores omnibus chirographis usitata a “ tempore dicti Domini Regis desuetudine viluerat (vilipenderat) ; et manus Gallicana quia magis legibilis, et aspectui “ perdelectabilis præcellebat, frequentius indies apud Anglos “ omnes complacebat.”

Yet this was the case only in a very gradual progression, corresponding with the improvement and diffusion of taste ; for

\* Abbot of *Greyland*, and author of the history of that Abbey, was born in London A. D. 1030—This excellent Chronicler treats from the foundation of that Abbey, 664, to the year 1091 ; he introduces much of the general history of the kingdom, with a variety of curious anecdotes that are no where else to be found.—INGULF died of the *gout*, at his Abbey, A. D. 1109, in the 79th year of his age.—It is a matter of much regret, that men of his sound judgment and good sense (in spite of the superstitious absurdities which stain the annals of that age) did not themselves commence writing and cultivating their native language ; instead of drudging in *monastic* Latin. The certain progress of both language, and knowledge, in the former case, is beyond every calculation of the Moderns. W.

for long after ALFRED's time, the *Anglo-Saxon* characters continued to be used, both in public and private writings.

### III. NORMANNIC SAXON PERIOD.

(*Normannic Anglo-Saxon.*)

This aera extends from the invasion of the Normans, under WILLIAM the CONQUEROR, in the year 1066, to the beginning of the thirteenth century, beyond the reign of HENRY II. who died in 1189; and consequently comprehends a series of about one hundred and fifty years.

The state of the English language, during this period, cannot be better described than in the words of the learned and perspicuous WARTON, in his "*History of English Poetry, from the close of the eleventh, to the commencement of the eighteenth century;*" pag. 2. &c. seq.

" The Norman Saxon dialect formed a language extremely barbarous, irregular, and intractable; and consequently promises no very striking specimens in any species of composition. Its substance was the Danish-Saxon adulterated with French. The Saxon indeed, a language subsisting on uniform principles, and polished by poets and theologists, however corrupted by the Danes, had much perspicuity, strength, and harmony \*: but the French, imported by the Conqueror and his people, was a confused jargon of Teutonic, Gaulish, and vitiated Latin. In this fluctuating state of our national speech, the French predominated. Even before the conquest, the Saxon language began to fall into contempt, and the French

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\* Because the Danish was intimately related to the Old Saxon; hence the language, which had originated in a mixture of both, necessarily preserved some identity. (i. e. similarity and uniformity of structure.) A.

French, or Frankish, to be substituted in its stead \* : a circumstance, which at once facilitated and foretold the Norman accession. In the year 652, it was the common practice of the Anglo-Saxons, to send their youth to the monasteries of France for education : and not only the language, but the manners of the French were esteemed the most polite accomplishments. In the reign of Edward the Confessor, the resort of Normans to the English court was so frequent, that the affectation of imitating the Frankish customs became almost universal : and even the lower class of people were ambitious of catching the Frankish idiom †. It was no difficult task for the Norman lords to banish that language, of which the natives began to be absurdly ashamed. The new invaders commanded the laws to be administered in French ‡. Many charters of monasteries were forged in Latin by the Saxon monks, for the present security of their possessions, in consequence of that aversion which the Normans professed to the Saxon tongue \*\*. Even

chil-

\* Probably this was the case only among the higher ranks of society ; for France, indeed, at this early period, was already considered as the School of the Sciences, and the legislatrix of taste to the rest of Europe. A.

† This strange bias seems, at present, to have shifted its ground, and to affect principally the *bigger* classes of society ;—the *biggest*, or dictatorial, order itself (*individually*) not excepted. Thus our ears are *publicly* annoyed with terms and phrases, which even the Germans, of late years, stigmatize with the appellation of *new-frankish*.—The *maigre* race of interpreters and translators, by profession, also contribute their share in corrupting the English language with new modelled words and idioms, the meaning of which they themselves (not rarely) mistake and misapply ; but to what class of society *these* individuals must be referred, I shall, in this place, not attempt to decide. And as I am not desirous of advancing groundless assertions, or of extending them, if they be founded, to every respective individual, without exception ; I must request the dispassionate reader, to turn over a few Numbers of the *Monthly*, the *Analytical*, the *Critical*, the *English*, or any other *Review*, in which the latest translations from the *French*, form the object of criticism ; and his curiosity will be frequently, and amply, gratified.

W.

‡ But there is a precept in Saxon from William the First, to the Sheriff of Somersetshire. *Hickeys Ther.* I. P. I. pag. 106.—See also *Prefat. ibid.* p. xv.

\*\* The Normans, who practised every specious expedient to plunder the monks, demanded

children at school were forbidden to read in their native language, and instructed in a knowledge of the Norman only. In the mean time, we should have some regard to the general and political state of the nation. The natives were so universally reduced to the lowest condition of neglect and indigence, *that the English name became a term of reproach*: and several generations elapsed, before one family of Saxon pedigree was raised to any distinguished honours, or could so much as attain the rank of baronage. Among other instances of that absolute and voluntary submission, with which our Saxon ancestors received a foreign yoke, it appears that they suffered their hand-writing to fall into discredit and disuse, which, by degrees became so difficult and obsolete, that few beside the oldest men could understand the characters. In the year 1095, WOLSTAN, bishop of Worcester, was deposed by the arbitrary Normans: it was objected against him, that he was “*a superannuated English idiot, who could not speak French*”. It is true,

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demanded a sight of the written evidences of their lands. The monks well knew, that it would have been useless or impolitic to have produced these evidences, or charters, in the original Saxon; as the Normans not only did not understand, but would have received with contempt, instruments written in that language. Therefore the monks were compelled to the pious fraud of forging them in Latin; and great numbers of these forged Latin charters, till lately supposed original, are still extant. *See SPELMAN in Not. ad. Concil. Anglie. p. 143; STILLINGFL. Orig. Eccles. Britann. p. 14. MARSHAM, Prefat. ad Dugd. And WHARTON Angl. Sacr. Vol. II. Monast. Prefat p. ii. & seq.—See also INGULPH, p. 512.—LAUNOY and MABILLON have treated this subject with great learning and penetration.*

\* *Matt. Paris. sub ann. —as quoted by WAKTON; p. 4. —— When in our days the conversation turns upon the comparative excellence of languages, I beg leave to ask: ‘are the modern rulers, tutors, or governesses (of and from France) actuated by a more discreet, by a less haughty spirit, than the Normans were EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS AGO?’—This question is easily answered. For, although it is fortunately not in *their* power to make us adopt *in-a-mass* their new-fangled tongue, by the same means which have induced us and other nations to adopt instruments, machines and expedients formerly unknown, or *unpractised*, in the art of war; yet we are already invaded by such numbers of a race (however *different* in degree, still of the *same* kind) as renders the consequences of our excessive indulgence every day more alarming. I am led to this reflection,*

at

true, that in some of the monasteries, particularly at Croyland and Tavistocke, founded by Saxon princes, there were regular preceptors in the Saxon language: but this institution was suffered to remain after the conquest, as a matter only of interest and necessity. The religious could not otherwise have understood their original charters. William's successor, Henry the First, gave an instrument of confirmation to William, Archbishop of Canterbury, which was written in the Saxon language and letters. Yet this is almost a single example. That monarch's motive was perhaps political: and he seems to have practised this expedient with a view of obliging his queen, who was of Saxon lineage; or with a design of flattering his English subjects, and of securing his title, already strengthened by a Saxon match, in consequence of so specious and popular an artifice."

" It was a common and indeed a very natural practice, for the transcribers of Saxon books, to change the Saxon orthography for the Norman, and to substitute in the place of the original Saxon, Norman words and phrases. A remarkable instance of this liberty, which sometimes perplexes and misleads the critics in Anglo-Saxon literature, appears in a voluminous collection of Saxon homilies,

pre-

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at a time, when I see the legislature itself seriously employed in concerting measures, to obviate these impending national evils.—As a well-wisher, and inhabitant, of this country, I hope Providence will guide the councils of the nation, upon a subject of the utmost importance. Those who consider these symptoms of an *approaching metamorphosis* as of little importance, plainly manifest their unacquaintance with the history of man and nations. They seem to forget, that the Anglo-Saxons *first* came to Britain with *no* hostile intentions; that they were invited, only to assist the oppressed Britons in repelling their rapacious enemies; and that revolutions, if excited and aided by foreign allies, were always attended with consequences, equally certain and fatal to the Natives; however imperfectly and gradually they were introduced.— To return, from this involuntary digression, to the subject of language, I shall conclude this Note with a remark made by a veteran in the philosophy of grammar: " That the *French*, with all its ease and " versatility, is a *monotonous language*; and that those alone who understand it, can " discover the great advantage the *English* have over that language by their accent, particularly in the article of verification."

W,

preserved in the Bodleian library, and written about the time of Henry the Second. It was with the Saxon characters, as with the signature of the crosses in public deeds; which were changed into the Norman mode of seals and subscriptions.'

' Among the manuscripts of Digby in the Bodleian library at Oxford, we find a religious or moral Ode, consisting of one hundred and ninety-one stanzas, which the learned Hickes places just after the conquest: but as it contains few Norman terms, I am inclined to think it of rather higher antiquity. The following stanza is a specimen:

' Sende God biforen him man  
The while he may to hevene,  
For beteré is on elmesse biforen  
Thanne ben after sevne.'

That is, ' Let a man send his good works before him to heaven while he can; for one alms-giving before death is of more value than seven afterwards.' The verses perhaps might have been thus written as two *Alexandrines*:

' Send God biforen him man the while he may to hevene,  
For betere is on elmesse biforen, than ben after sevne.'

' Yet alternate rhyming, applied without regularity, and as rhymes accidentally presented themselves, was not uncommon in our early poetry.'

HICKES and WARTON have printed a satirical poem on monastic life, in which the *Saxon* is remarkably adulterated by the Normannic, and which must have been written soon after the incursions of the Normans, or at least prior to the reign of Henry II. The poet begins this singular performance, with describing the land of idleness or luxury:

Fur in see, bi waſt Spaynege,  
Is a lond ihote Cokayne :  
Ther nis lond under heventriche (1).  
Of wel of godnis hit iliche.  
d

Thoy

1 The celestial empire, *Sax.*

Thoy paradis bi miri (2) and brigt  
 Cokaygn is of fairir fight.  
 What is ther in paradis  
 But grafs, and flure, and greneris ?  
 Thoy ther be joy, and gret dute (3),  
 Ther nis met, bot frute.  
 Ther nis halle, bure (4), no bench ;  
 Bot watir manis thurst to quench, &c.

‘ In the following lines,’ says WARTON, ‘ there is a vein of satirical imagination and some talent at description. The luxury of the monks is represented under the idea of a monastery constructed of various kinds of delicious and costly viands.’

Ther is a wel fair abbei,  
 Of white monkes and of grei,  
 Ther beth boures and halles :  
 All of pasteus beth the walles,  
 Of fleis of fiffe, and a rich met,  
 The likefullist that man mai et.  
 Fluren cakes beth the schingles (5) alle,  
 Of church, cloister, bours and halle.  
 The pinnes (6) beth fat podinges  
 Rich met to princes and to kinges.—  
 Ther is a cloyster fair and ligt,  
 Brod and lang of sembli figt.  
 The pilers of that cloyster alle  
 Beth iturned of cristale,  
 With harlas and capital  
 Of grene jaspe and red coral.  
 In the prae is a tree  
 Swithe likeful for to se,  
 The rote is gingeur and galingale,

The

2 Merry, cheerful. “ Although Paradise is cheerful and bright, *Cokayne* is a more beautiful place.” 3 Pleasure. 4 Buttery; or the room where provisions are laid up. 5 *Sbingle*. “ The tiles, or covering of the house, are of rich cakes.” 6 The pinnacles.

The sions beth al fed wale.  
 Trie maces beth the flure,  
 The rind canel of swete odure :  
 The frute gilofre of gode smakke,  
 Of cucubes ther nis no lakke.—  
 Ther beth iiiii willis (7) in the abbei  
 Of tracle and halwey,  
 Of baume and eke piement,  
 Ever ernend (8) to rigt rent (9) ;  
 Of thai-stremis al the molde  
 Stonis pretiuse (10) and golde,  
 Ther is saphir, and uniune,  
 Carbuncle and astiune,  
 Smaragde, lugre, and grasseiune,  
 Beril, onyx, toposiune,  
 Amethiste and crisolite,  
 Calcedun and epetite (11).  
 Ther beth birddes mani, and fale  
 Throstill, thrusse, and nigtingale,  
 Chalandre, and wodwale,  
 And othir briddes without tale,  
 That stinteth never bi her migt  
 Miri to fing dai and nigt.

[*Nonnulla defunt.*]



Yite I do yow me to witte,  
 The gees iroftid on the spitte,  
 Fleey to that abbai, god hit wot,  
 And gredith (12), gees al hote al hote, &c.

Our author then makes a pertinent transition to a convent of nuns ; which he supposes to be very commodiously situated at no

7 Fountains. 8. Running. *Sax.* 9. Course. *Sax.* 10. The Arabian Philosophy imported into Europe, was full of the doctrine of precious stones. 11. Our old poets are never so happy as when they can get into a catalogue of things or names. (WARTON.) 12. Crieth. *Gallo-Franc.*

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great distance, and in the same fortunate region of indolence, ease and affluence.'

An other abbai is ther bi  
For soth a gret nunnerie ;  
Up a river of swet milk  
Whar is plente grete of silk.  
When the summeris dai is hote,  
The yung nunnnes takith a bote.  
And doth ham forth in that river  
Both with oris and with stere :  
Whan hi beth fur from the abbei  
Hi makith him nakid for to plei,  
And leith dune in to the brimme  
And doth him sleilich for to swimme :  
The yung monkes that hi seeth  
Hi doth ham up and forth he fleeth,  
And comith to the nunnnes anon,  
And euch monk him takith on,  
And snellich (13) bexith forth har prei  
To the mochill grei abbei (14),  
And techith the nunnnes an oreisun  
With jambleus (15) up and dun \*.

\* This poem was designed to be sung at public festivals : a practice which was then very common ; and concerning which it may be sufficient to remark at present, that a *Joculator*, or *Bard*, was an officer belonging to the court of William the Conqueror.'

Another Norman-Saxon poem cited by the same industrious antiquary (HICKES), is entitled "THE LIFE OF ST MARGARET." The structure of its versification considerably differs from that in the last mentioned piece, and is like the French *Alexandrines*. But I am of opinion, that a pause, or division, was intended in the middle of every verse ; and in this respect, its versification resembles

13. Quick, quickly. *Gallo-Franc.* 14. To the great Abbey of Grey Monks.

15. Lascivious motions. *Gambols.* *Fr.* *Gambiller.*

\* HICKES. *Thesaur.* I. Part I. p. 231. seq.

fembles also that of ALBION'S ENGLAND, or DRAYTON'S POLYALBION, which was a species very common about the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The rhymes are also continued to every fourth line. It appears to have been written about the time of the crusades. It begins thus :

Olde ant <sup>a</sup> yonge I priet <sup>b</sup> ou, our folies for to lete,  
 Thinketh on god that yef ou wite, our funnes to bete.  
 Here I mai tellen ou, wit wordes faire and swete,  
 The vie <sup>c</sup> of one maiden was hoten <sup>d</sup> Margarete.  
 Hire fader was a patriac, as ic ou tellen may,  
 In Auntioge wif eches <sup>e</sup> I in the false lay,  
 Deve godes <sup>f</sup> ant dombe, he servid nit and day,  
 So deden mony othere that singeth welaway.  
 Theodosius was is nome on Criste ne levede he noutt,  
 He levede on the false godes, that weren with honden wroutt,  
 Tho that child sculde cristine ben it com well in thoutt,  
 Ebed wen <sup>g</sup> it were ibore, to deth it were ibroutt, &c.

‘ In the sequel, OLIBRIUS, lord of Antioch, who is called a *Saracen*, falls in love with MARGARET: but she being a christian, and a candidate for canonization, rejects his solicitations, and is thrown into prison.’

Meiden Margarete one nitt in prison lay  
 Ho com biforn Olibrius on that other dai.  
 Meiden Margarete, lef up upon my lay.  
 And Ihu that thou levest on, thou do him al avey.  
 Lef on me ant be my wife, ful wel the mai spede.  
 Auntioge and Asie scaltou han to mede:  
 Ciculauton <sup>b</sup> and purpel pall scaltou have to wede:  
 With all the metes of my lond ful vel I scal the fede.

‘ This piece was printed by Hickes, from a manuscript in Trinity-college library at Cambridge. It seems to belong to the manuscript

<sup>a</sup> And. <sup>b</sup> I direct. <sup>c</sup> Fr. “ I advise you, our, &c. <sup>d</sup> Life. <sup>e</sup> Fr. <sup>f</sup> Called Saxon. <sup>g</sup> Chose a wife. *Sax.* “ He was married in Antioch. <sup>f</sup> Deai gods, &c. <sup>g</sup> In bed. <sup>b</sup> Checklaton. See Obs. Fair. Q. I. 194. (WARTQN.)

manuscript metrical LIVES OF THE SAINTS, which form a very considerable volume, and were probably translated or paraphrased from Latin or French prose into English rhyme, before the year 1200. We are sure that they were written after the year 1169, as they contain the LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS OF BECKET. In the Bodleian library are three manuscript copies of these LIVES OF THE SAINTS, in each of which the life of St. Margaret occurs; but it is not always exactly the same with this printed by Hickes. And on the whole, the Bodleian Lives seem inferior in point of antiquity.'

Towards the conclusion of this period, true poetry begins to flourish in England as well as in Germany, some features of which are already discoverable in the preceding poems. Yet, withall, the Danish-Saxon, and probably also the British-Saxon bards can claim little more merit than that of making rhymes, and frequently only of writing abrupt sentences in prose. To prove this, I shall only quote (the two first stanzas of) a Normannic-Saxon Ballad \*, which is full of alliteration, and has a burthen or chorus :

Blow northerne wynd, sent  
 Thou me my suetyng e ; blow  
 Nórtherne wynd, blou, blou, blou.  
 Ich ot a burde in bouri bryht  
 That fully semly is on syht,  
 Menlful maiden of myht,  
 Feire ant fre to fonde.  
 In all this wurhliche won,  
 A bnrde of blod and of bon,

Never

\* WARTON observes in his "History of English Poetry," that this is the *earliest English love-song*, he could discover; that it is among the Harleian manuscripts in the British Museum; and that he would place it before, or about, the year 1200.

Never <sup>a</sup> zete y nuste <sup>b</sup> non,  
 Luffomore in Londe. *Blow*, &c.  
 With lokkes <sup>c</sup> lefliche and longe,  
 With front ant face feir to fonde ;  
 With murthes monie mote heo mōnge  
 That brid so breme in boure ;  
 With lōfsum eic grete and gode,  
 Weth browen blif soll undirhode,  
 He that rest him on the rode  
 That leflich lyf honoure. *Blou* <sup>d</sup> &c. &c.

In a truly pastoral vein, a lover \* thus addresses his mistress, whom he supposes to be the most beautiful girl; “ Bituene Lyncolne and Lyndeseye, Northampton and Lounde †.”

When the nytenhale singes the wodes waxen grene,  
 Lef, gras, and blosme, springes in Avril y wene.  
 And love is to myn harte gon with onē spere so kene  
 Nyht and day my blod hit drynkes myn hart deth me tene.

“ The following verses have nearly the same measure, and are not unpleasing to the ear : ”

My deth y love, my lyf ich hate for a levedy shene,  
 Heo is brith so daies liht, that is on mewel sene.  
 Al y falewe so doth the lef in somir when hit is grene,  
 Zef mi thoht helpeth me noht to whom schal I me mene ?  
 Ich have loved at this yere that y may love na more,  
 Ich have fiked moni syh, lemon, for thin ore,  
 . . . . my love never the ner and that me reweth sore ;  
 Suete lemon, thenck on me ich have loved the sore,  
 Suete lemon, I prey the, of love one speche,  
 While y lyve in worlde so wyde other nill I seche †.

If

<sup>a</sup> Yet. <sup>b</sup> Knew not. <sup>c</sup> Lively. <sup>d</sup> Sic.

\* Probably of the reign of King JOHN,

† London. † *MSS. Harl. 2253. Fol. Membran. f. 72. b.*—The pieces cited from this manuscript, appear to be of the hand writing of the reign of Edward the First, (WARTON.)

xxxvi THREE PHILOLOGICAL

If we attempt to trace the progress of a language, we shall always find it connected with the intellectual improvement of a people; for language, in every instance, is the first object, in which national cultivation becomes manifest. To determine this, requires the most accurate knowledge of the gradual advances made by a people in manners, arts, and sciences, together with a very intimate acquaintance with the more ancient modes of speaking and writing, as well as with the changes produced in them, by these respective improvements. In this progress, every nation keeps its peculiar path; a path marked by the collective number of internal and external circumstances, the particular knowledge of which is indispensable to a philological inquirer.

In *Germany*, the old unpolished language of the country was improved through its own resources; hence the progress towards its refinement was necessarily slow. In *France*, the language of the natives was formed by a mixture with that of the Romans, yet in such a manner, as made the latter prevail in that mixture; hence its improvement was uncommonly rapid, because the Roman was already a polished language. In *England*, the native language received improvements by a mixture with the French; yet the former still remained the prevailing language: thus it made more rapid progress towards its refinement than that of the German, but slower than that of the French.—Yet we possess no history of any language executed, nor even attempted, in this *progressive* manner. And as the natives of Britain have hitherto neglected to trace the gradual improvements of *their* language, it

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can with less justice be expected, that *I* should enquire into the path, which they followed. Nor will it be required of *me*, to point out minutely the various changes that have taken place in the English language, and to state the causes, or the origin, of those changes.

#### IV. FRENCH-SAXON; OR ENGLISH PERIOD.

This is not only the longest, but also the most remarkable period in the literary history of England: it begins with the thirteenth Century, and extends to the present time.—The Danish-Saxon language, in the preceding period, being corrupted by the Normannic, now begins to unite with the more modern French; to adopt likewise, in consequence of this precedent, many words from the Latin, and to form by the assistance of both the present English language.

The Normannic-Saxon language was suffered to fall into disuse and contempt, during the era, of which we have last treated; the pure Normannic now became the fashionable language of the court, and of polished society. This happened with the greater facility, as the Norman barons and lords ruled over England, and oppressed its ancient inhabitants, with unlimited sway. But as soon as the power of the barons, during the thirteenth century, began to decline; as soon as the commons, or the order of the citizens, acquired more authority and influence; in fine, as soon as England, with gradual steps, approached to its present constitution;—the popular language, hitherto despised, reclaimed its due rank; it was a-

gain

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gain introduced into the higher circles, and thus its cultivation was the more easily and the more effectually accomplished. Still, however, the vernacular dialect had been almost suppressed, among the higher classes of the nation, by the language of the haughty Normans; a circumstance which sufficiently accounts for its strange mixture with the French. And as in process of time, French manners and improvements found a more general reception in Britain, this mixture daily increased, not only through the reception of new words, but also in the terminations of old primitive words; and in the various modes of exhibiting and combining them in phrases. In this manner, indeed, the ground-work of the language preserved its *Saxon* origin; but its progress, its cultivation, its augmentation, and subsequent refinement, were carried on upon the principle of the *French*.

Consistent with the limits of this Essay, I cannot enlarge upon the particular phenomena connected with these multiplied changes; I must, therefore, content myself with producing a few specimens selected from the best writers in every century, during this long and productive period.

\* \* \* \* \*

In order to fill up a chasm which both, JOHNSON and ADELUNG, have left in this part of the history of the English language, by not entering into the respective merits of the different writers, during the middle ages, to whom we stand so justly indebted;—I have here selected a number of passages relating to this subject, from a work much esteemed at home, and still more abroad, among the lovers of British literature. This work, on account of its high—  
though

though comparatively small—price, is not in the hands of many readers; as it already extends to a considerable number of volumes, since its beginning in 1780. It is the NEW ANNUAL REGISTER, to which I allude, and from which I have carefully extracted (and exemplified with a great variety of specimens) those valuable and truly philological remarks, which the reader will find stated, at greater length, in the  *fifth, sixth, and following Volumes* of this work, under the head of “ *A concise history of the state of knowledge, literature and taste in Great Britain.*”—It therefore only remains to add, that the  *principal part of this history* is partly abstracted from the learned disquisitions, partly founded upon the historical facts, which we find very perspicuously, though somewhat tediously, stated in “ *WARTON’s History of English Poetry,*” three Volumes, Quarto, London, 1770. & seq.

Having recounted the particular causes, to which the greatest alteration and improvement of religious knowledge in England was owing, from the accession of EDWARD I. to the accession of HENRY IV.; and having justly observed that JOHN WICKLIFF \* first opened the understandings of the regular clergy;—the philosophic annalist thus proceeds in illustrating the subsequent effects of these changes, with respect to the state of language and literature in Britain.

*Division First; from 1272, to 1399†.*

From EDWARD I. to HENRY IV.

‘ The literary revolution, which took place in the reigns of EDWARD III. and RICHARD II. with no small degree of

\* This acute Divine opposed the Pope’s supremacy in 1377, and was forty years after, burnt for being a heretic.

† All passages enclosed within single commas, belong to the *New Annual Register.*

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splendour, was the appearance of poetry in our own tongue. To this period was reserved the honour of engaging the *Muses* to speak in *English*, with such dignity as to call for general attention and admiration. We must not, however, imagine that before this time no attempts at versification were made in our native language. The poetical productions of the age, if such they may be called, were numerous, and our old libraries abound in them. Previously to the æra, concerning which we are treating, the *Lives of the Saints* were written in verse, and many parts of the Bible were translated in the same manner.'

'A love-song and some compositions of a miscellaneous, nature occur in the reign of King JOHN \*. Our early poetical effusions appeared likewise, not unfrequently, in the form of satire; and when this was clothed in allegory, it was sometimes conducted with success. The objects, on which it was exerted, were generally the lawyers and the clergy. But the principal efforts of our yet untutored Muses, were rhyming chronicles and metrical romances.'

WARTON, in the first Volume, p. 43, of his History, entertains us with a ballad, or a satirical poem, composed by a bard devoted to the court of SIMON of MONTFORT, Earl of Leicester, a powerful Baron. It appeared soon after the famous battle of 1264, which had a very unhappy issue for the king, and which is described as follows :

Sitteth

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\* A monarch of a vindictive and usurping temper, whom the English Barons compelled to confirm the *Magna Charta*, in 1215;—he died at Newark, October 18, 1216.

## 1.

Sitteth alle fille, ant herkeneth to mi :  
 The kyng of Alemaigne, be mi leaute (*Loyalty*).  
 Thritt thouſent pound askede he  
 For to make the pees (*peace*) in the countre  
 And fo ſo he dode more.  
 Richard, thah (*though*) thou be ever tricchard (*treacherous*)  
 Trichthen ſhall thou never more.

## 2.

Richard of Alemaigne, whil that he was kying,  
 He ſpende all his trefour opon ſwyvyng,  
 Haveth he nouſt of Walingford oferlyng (*superior*)  
 Let him habbe, aſe he brew, bale (*poison*) to dryng,  
 Maugre Wyndesore,  
 Richard thah thou, &c.

## 3.

The kyng of Alemaigne wende do ful wel  
 He faſeſde de mulne for a caſtel,  
 With hare, ſharpe ſwerdes he grounde the ſtel,  
 He wende that the ſayles were mangonel.

To help Wyndesore.  
 Richard thah thou, &c. &c. &c.

‘ In the reign of EDWARD I. \*, the character of our poetical compositions was considerably changed. The minſtrels either ſubſtituted fictitious adventures for historical traditio- nary facts, or reality was diſguifed by the representations of invention ;

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\* Born, June 16, 1239 ; ſucceeded to the Crown, November 16, 1272 ; re- duced Scotland 1299, died July 7, 1307 ; was buried at Westminster, where on May 2. 1774, ſome antiquaries examined his tomb, when they found his corps unconſumed, though buried 466 years.

invention ; and a taste for ornamental expression gradually prevailed over the rude simplicity of the native English phraseology. This change was occasioned, among other causes, by the introduction and increase of the tales of chivalry. It was in the reign of EDWARD II. \*, when the metrical romances chiefly flourished ; and though the poetry of them was, in general, very rude, imperfect, and feeble, they occasionally exhibited gleams of imagination. One of them, entitled ‘ *Kyng of Tars*,’ has a warmth of description in certain passages, that is not unlike the manner of CHAUCER. From the productions of which we now speak, this great poet and his cotemporaries undoubtedly derived some advantage ; but it was their acquaintance with Italian literature which still more enabled them to produce a literary revolution in their own country. Surprising effects had been wrought in *Italy*, by the genius and the writings of DANTE (1) and PETRARCH (2). Our *English* poets were not equally happy in their endeavours to enlighten the understanding, and to refine the taste of the nation. They had greater difficulties to contend with, and were far more unfavourably situated for obtaining a conquest over them. Their style was rough, and the harmony of their poetical numbers was very defective. Nevertheless we are much indebted to them for assiduously applying to the study of their native language, and for contributing, in a considerable degree

\* This unfortunate Monarch was born in 1284 ; was the first *Prince of Wales*, ascended the throne, 1307 ; was dethroned and murdered in 1327.

(1) Born, 1265 ; died, 1321. — (2) FRANCIS PETRARCH, born at *Arezzo*, 1304 ; died, 1374.

degree, to its enrichment and cultivation. The change effected by them is, upon the whole, an important event in the literary history of this country.'

' When we look into the accounts of the *British* writers, which have been given us by LELAND (3) and other biographers, and observe the number of persons whom these biographers have rescued from oblivion, together with the praises they have bestowed upon them, as excelling in almost every branch of knowledge, and only defective with respect to the elegance of their style, we are ready to believe, that the times preceding the *Reformation* were much more learned than has usually been imagined. Should we allow full credit to the encomiums, which our historians have so liberally poured on a number of men whose works are now either totally lost, or totally neglected, we might hence see that literature is of no avail (or is not duly valued) without taste; and that, if science be communicated in barbarous language, it will be treated with disregard and contempt by a polite and cultivated age. But the greatest part of our ancient monastic authors, notwithstanding the pompous eulogiums we read concerning them, were as despicable for the matter, as for the expression of their performances. In every view, therefore, they were justly consigned to dust and worms; and though we possess something of an antiquarian spirit, we are not endued with such a portion of it, as to be extremely fond of things which

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3 JOHN LELAND, a celebrated antiquary, died 1552; aged 45: Vid. his works, for further information.

which are recommended by nothing but their antiquity. Several persons, however, may deserve a place in a history of the progres of knowledge, whose compositions are no longer valuable; and, as learning cannot be pursued, even in the most disadvantageous manner, or in the most unfavourable circumstances, without producing good effects in certain instances, a diligent enquirer will always find some few names that are worthy of being mentioned with particular esteem. Where this is the case, there is a pleasure in paying the tribute due to departed merit; it is doing honour to our country, to let none be forgotten who have a lawful title to remembrance and applause.'

' Though general light seemed rather to increase during the period, of which we are treating; yet, excepting two or three illustrious men who appeared towards the conclusion of it, this æra did not produce a set of writers equal in abilities and character to those who flourished in the preceding.'

' Philological and Polite Literature, till it was revived at the close of this æra, was in as low a state as Natural Philosophy.—Though we have seen that so much poetry was produced in the beginning of the period before us, it is remarkable that the names of its writers are, for the most part, buried in oblivion. We know not to whom we owe far the greater number of metrical romances, and other compositions which the age afforded. It is probable that they were the productions of monks who lived and died, unknown, in their convents. The first poet whose name occurs, is ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER, who flourished about the year 1280. He was a monk

monk of the abbey of Gloucester, and composed a poem of considerable length, which is a History of England, in verse, from Brutus to his own time. At the close of Edward the First's reign, we meet with another poet named ROBERT MANNING, but more commonly, ROBERT de BRUNNE \*, who appears nevertheless only as a translator. The work translated, or rather paraphrased by him, was originally written by ROBERT GROSTEST, and was entitled *Manual de Peche*, or the Manual of Sins. Among the authors of metrical romances in the time of Edward II. ADAM DAVIE (1) is the only person whose

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name

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\* Because he resided in the monastery of *Brunne*, or *Bourne*, in *Lincolnshire* inhabited by the monks of the order of St. Gilbert. He translated many pieces, from the French and Latin, into English verse; among which "*The castle of love*, by bishop Grosseteſte," is not the least remarkable. It begins with the following pious lines:

That good thinketh good may do,  
And God will help him thar to:  
Ffor nas never good work wrought  
With oute biginninge of good thougt.  
Ne never was wrought non vuel (well, good) thyng.  
That vuel thougt nas the biginnyg.  
God fluder, and fone and holigofte  
That alle thing on corthe fixt and wolt  
That one God art and thrillid (trinity)  
And threo persones in one hod,  
Withouten end and biginninge,  
To whom we ougten over alle thinge,  
Worshepe him with trewe love,  
That kine worthe king art us above, &c. &c.

(1) Of this character no accounts appear to be extant respecting his merits as a bard, nor of the time when he flourished: at least I have not been able to discover any in Dr. KIPPS' *Biographia Britannica*,

name has descended to posterity. ROBERT BASTON, (2) a poet who attended this monarch in his expedition to Scotland, wrote chiefly in Latin. It was not till the reign of EDWARD III. (3) that

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tannica, in the *Encyclopediæ Britannica*, last edition, and several other works I have purposely, though vainly, consulted.—The same will apply to other authors mentioned in this *History*, whose names are not accompanied with any biographical notes.

W.

(2) The greater part of his poems are written in *Latin*, of which that “*De Sacerdotum Luxuriis*” is not the least curious.—In English he wrote “*A Book of Poems*,” and “*A Volume of Tragedies and Comedies*.”—Being poet laureat and public Orator at Oxford, he accompanied Edward I. in his expedition into Scotland in 1304, to celebrate his victories over the Scots: but Robert Baston unluckily fell into the enemy’s hands, and was obliged by torture to change his note and sing the successes of Robert Bruce, who then claimed the crown of Scotland. This task he reluctantly complied with, as he intimates in the two first lines:

“ In dreary verse my rhymes I make  
Bewailing whilst such theme I take,” &c.

Our author’s poetry was expressed in somewhat barbarous style, but not contemptible for the age in which he lived. He died about 1310.

KIPPIS.

(3) Born at Windsor, 1312; proclaimed king and crowned at Westminster 1327; died in 1377.—He was undoubtedly one of the greatest princes that ever swayed the sceptre in England; whether we respect him as a warrior or lawgiver, a monarch, or a man. He possessed the courage and romantic spirit of Alexander; the penetration, the fortitude, the polished manners, of Julius; the munificence, the liberality, the wisdom of Augustus Cæsar. He was tall, majestic, of an elegant figure, with a piercing eye, and aquiline visage. He excelled all his contemporaries in feats of arms and personal address. He was courteous, affable and eloquent; a constitutional knight-errant; and his example diffused the spirit of chivalry through the whole nation. In imitation of the youthful monarch who delighted in tilts and tournaments, every individual betook himself to the exercise of arms; every breast glowed with emulation, every heart panted with the thirst

of

that the geniuses sprang up, who produced that poetic revolution already mentioned, and which reflects so much honour on themselves and on their country. RICHARD HAMPOLE, a doctor in divinity, of the order of St Augustine, must not be reckoned in the number of these geniuses. ROBERT LONGLANDE, who flourished about the year 1350, and who was the author of the poem called "*The Vision of Pierce Plowman*," merits a far superior distinction. This poem contains a series of distinct visions, in which the vices of almost every profession, particularly of the clergy, and the absurdities of superstition, are ridiculed with much humour and spirit. The satire is accompanied with a strong vein of allegorical invention. The great defect of Longlande lies in his language. He has adopted the style of the Anglo-Saxon poets, and imitated them in their alliterative versification; in consequence of which he is remarkably uncouth, and sometimes obscure. It is to be lamented, that so much genius and abilities should be hidden by so unpleasant and ungracious a mode of composition. Bad

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of glory; and when he took the field, there was not a soldier in his army, who did not serve from sentiment and fight for reputation. The love of glory was certainly the predominant passion of Edward, to the gratification of which he did not scruple to sacrifice the feelings of humanity, the lives of his subjects, and the interest of his country; and nothing could have induced or enabled his people to bear the load of taxes, with which they were encumbered in this reign, but the love and admiration of his person, the fame of his victories, and the excellent laws and regulations which the parliament enacted with his advice and concurrence; and finally, the first distinction was made between lords and commons in 1342, by which the foundation was laid for the present English constitution; a fabric that is believed to be capable of repairing and occasionally reproducing its worm-eaten pillars, however injured and preyed upon by the tooth of time.

as the model set by Longlande was, he had a number of imitators.'

Longland was a cotemporary of Mandeville, and his *Vision* before mentioned is one of the best poems that appeared during this æra. Under the fictitious idea of visions, or apparitions, he lashes in a satirical strain, the vices of all ranks, and particularly those arising from the absurdities of superstition and the corrupted manners of the clergy.—Instead of the long passages quoted by Warten, a shorter one will suffice here, in which *Nature* (Kynde) at the command of *Conscience* and its companions, *Age* and *Death*, sends her diseases from the planets.

Kynde Conscience then heard, and came ouf of the planetts,  
 And sent forth his forriours Févers, and Fluxes,  
 Coughes, and Cadiacles; Crampes and Toth aches,  
 Reumes and Kadgondes, and raynous Scalles,  
 Byles and Botches, and burnyng Agues  
 Freneses, and foule Evill, foragers of Kynde.  
 Ther was " Harowe ! and Helpe ! here cometh Kynde !  
 " With Death that is dreadful, to unde us all !"  
 The lord that lyveth after lust tho aloud cried— — —  
 Age the hoore, he was in the vaw-ward,  
 And bare the banner before Death : by ryght he is claimed,  
 Kynde came after, with many kene sores,  
 As Pockes and Pestilences, and much people shent.  
 So kynde through corruptions kylled full many :  
 Death came dryvyng after and all to dust pashed  
 Kyngs and Kayfers, knightes and popes.  
 Many a lovely lady, and leman of knyghtes,  
 Swoned and swelted for sorowe and Death's dyntes.  
 Conscience, of his courtesye to Kynde he besought  
 To cease and safre, of fe where they wolde,  
 Leave pride prively, and be perfite christen,  
 And Kynde ceased tho, to see the people amende.

At length *Good Fortune* and *Pride* dispatch a numerous host of enenries led on by *Desire*, to make an attack upon *Conscience*. And gadered a great host, all agayne *Conscience* : This Lechery led on, with a laughyng chere, And with a privye speeche, and paynted wordes, And armed him in idleness and in high bearyng. He bare a bowe in his hand, and many bloody arrowes, Were fethered with faire behest, and many a false truth.

Upon this *Conscience* is besieged by *Anticbris* who is aided by the seven great giants (the seven mortal sins), in which expedition *Idleness* forms the order of the attack with an army consisting of upwards of a thousand well-fed prelates, &c.

There was a Scottish poet in the present period, who is entitled to distinguished praises. The person we have in view is JOHN BARBOUR, (4) Arch-deacon of Aberdeen. His poem

called

(4) Very little is known of this illustrious character; one of the earliest Caledonian bards, except that he seems to have been born about 1326; that he was Archdeacon of Aberdeen in 1357, in which year he travelled to Oxford, and was appointed by the Bishop of Aberdeen, one of the commissioners for the ransom of David II. king of Scotland; and that in 1365 he accompanied six knights to St Denis near Paris. In the year 1375, as he himself informs us, he wrote a poem of considerable length, which was first published, in the original Scottish verse, from a MS. dated 1489, with Notes and a Glossary; by Mr Pinkerton, in three Volumes 12mo. London, 1790; entitled, *The Bruce*; or the History of Robert I. King of Scotland.—Mr P. the present editor says that “ taking the total merits of this work together, he prefers it to the early exertions of even the Italian muse, to the melancholy sublimity of Dante, and the amorous quaintness of Petrarcha. The reader will here find few of the graces of fine poetry, little of the

attic

called “ *The History of Robert Bruce, King of the Scots;*” allowance being made for the time in which it was written, is eminent for the beauty of its style. Another bard of the same country wrote a poem on the exploits of SIR WILLIAM WALLACE, which abounds with fine passages. Both these writers rose to a strain of versification, expression, and poetical imagery, greatly superior to the age and country in which they lived.”

“ We

attic dress of the muse: but here are life, spirit, ease, plain sense, pictures of real manners, perpetual incident, and entertainment. The language is remarkably good for the time; and far superior, in neatness and elegance, even to that of Gawin Douglas, who wrote more than a century after. But when we consider that our author is not only the first poet but the earliest historian of Scotland, who has entered into any detail, and from whom any view of the real state and manners of the country can be had; and that the hero, whose life he paints so minutely, was a monarch equal to the greatest of modern times; let the historical and poetical merits of his work be weighed together; and then opposed to any other early poet of the present nations in Europe.”

“ It is indeed posterior in time to the earliest poetry of the most modern nations; but it must be considered that Scotland hardly had one writer in the thirteenth century, and this poem was written in the fourteenth.”

The following short specimen of the poem will sufficiently prove these assertions, and we have only to attend to the observation which the editor has prefixed to his Glossary; viz. “ The chief obstacle in perusing this work arises from the orthography, which is extremely irregular. To understand many words, it is only necessary to pronounce them aloud; and the meaning which is obscured by the spelling, will be evident from the sound.”

A ! fredome is a nobill thing !

Fredome mayse man to haiff liking; (1)

Makes

(1) Makes man to have joy

We are now arrived to **GEOFFREY CHAUCER**, (5) who claims  
the

Fredome all solace to man giffis :  
He levys at ese, that frely levys !  
A noble hart may haiff nane ese,  
Na ellys nocht that may him plese, (2)  
Gyff fredome failyhe : for fre liking (3)  
Is yharnyt our all othir thing (4)  
Na he, that ay hase levyt fre,  
May nocht knew weill the propyrte,  
The angyr, na the wrechyt dome, (5)  
That is cowplyt to foule thyrdome.  
But gyff he had assayit it,  
Than all perquer he fuld it wyt ; (6)  
And fuld think fredome mar to prysse,  
Than all the gold in wold that is.

As a specimen of Barbour's rural poetry, the following few lines will confirm Mr ANDREWS's opinion, when he says in his *History of Great Britain, connected with the Chronology of Europe; &c. 4to, London 1794*, "That Barbour wrote the life and exploits of Robert Bruce in good rhyme; and in a style more like our modern English, than the language of Chaucer."

This was in midst of month of May,  
When birdis sing on ilka spray,  
Melland. (7) their notes, with seemly soun,  
For softnes of the sweet seaoun.  
And leavis of the branchis spreeds,  
And blo omis bright, beside them, breeds,  
And fieldis strawed are with flow'rs  
Well favoring of feir (8) colours.

(5) **GEOFFREY CHAUCER**, justly considered as the father of our English poets, and the first great improver and reformer of our language

(2) Na ellys nocht; nor any thing else. (3) fre liking; free will. (4) yharnyt our; desired above. (5) angyr; quare, angyr, i. e. anguis? (6) perquer; perfectly. wyt; know.

(7) Melland; mingling. (8) feir; their

the highest place of distinction, on account of his preeminent merit, and the more extensive influence of his example. Into the particulars of his life, which are minutely discussed in the

### Biographia

language, was born in the second year of Edward III. A. D. 1328. He studied first at Cambridge where he composed his poem called “*The Court of Love*,” in the 18th year of his age, which carries in it very pregnant proofs of skill and learning as well as quickness of wit, and great strength of genius. He compleated his studies in the University of Oxford, or as some say, at Canterbury College.—LELAND informs us, that he was a ready logician, a smooth rhetorician, a pleasant poet, a grave philosopher, an ingenuous mathematician, and a holy divine. He afterwards applied himself to the study of Law, in the Middle-Temple; and was made King’s page, about the age of thirty, an office then very honourable, as the English court was the most splendid in Europe. He married Philippa Rouet, a favourite of the Duke and Duchess of Gaunt, about the year 1360; was sent by King Edward, as his agent to Genoa, to hire ships for the King’s Navy; and having accomplished the object of this mission to the satisfaction of his master, the King granted him, in the 48th year of his reign, a pitcher of wine daily in the port of London, to be delivered by the Butler of England, and very soon after he was made Comptroller of the customs in the port of London. Yet it is doubtful, how long he remained in this lucrative office; for in the second year of King Richard his affairs were in such confusion that he was obliged to have recourse to the King’s protection, in order to screen him from his creditors.—By attaching himself to Wickliff, and his followers, he was involved in great calamities, and became equally suspected by the King, and disliked by the people.—In 1382, he was obliged to fly from London into Hainault, France, and Zeeland, in which banishment he almost perished by the barbarous ingratitude of his former friends in England, who instead of sending him any supplies, rather hindered every attempt made by others

Biographia, we shall not enter. It may be sufficient to say, that he was conversant with the court, and engaged in public affairs; that he was closely connected with John of Gaunt, and

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married

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others to relieve him. When almost perishing from want, he privately came over to England, where he was discovered, seized, thrown into prison, and upon disclosing all he knew of the king's enemies, he at last obtained his pardon. Yet he did not take any measures to revenge himself against his treacherous friends by the confessions extorted from him; though with regard to himself they brought upon him an inexpressible load of calumnies and slanders.—The pension of 20 marks per annum, together with the daily pitcher of wine granted him by King Edward, and forfeited by his dereliction of the court party, were confirmed to him in the reign of King Henry, from whom he obtained a licence on the 11th of May 1389 to dispose of them to one Scalby. In this unexpected and terrible reverse of fortune, he very wisely resolved to quit that busy scene of life, in which he had met with so many troubles, and to seek a more lasting happiness in retirement. He therefore chose Woodstock for his retreat; a place which had been the sweet scene of so much satisfaction to him in the days of his prosperity; and here he employed part of his time in revising and correcting his writings, totally secluded from the world, and tasting only those calm and solid pleasures which are the result of a wise man's reflections on the vicissitudes of human life. He resided here in a square stone house near the park-gate, which still retains his name; and it well deserves this honourable token, for, being consecrated in his poems, the whole country round about is become, to Englishmen, a kind of Classic ground. The short time he lived after the accession of Edward IV, was chiefly employed in regulating his private affairs which had suffered by the public disorders: for all the public acts of the deposed King Richard, in the 21st year of his reign, being declared void, Chaucer was forced to quit his retirement, to come up to town to solicit his causes, and beginning

married the sister of the famous Catherine Swynford ; that he was involved in the misfortunes of his friend and master ; that he was obliged to flee into Holland, when the Duke was disgraced ;

beginning now to bend under the weight of years, this unlucky accession of busines, which obliged him to alter his usual way of living, might very possibly hasten his end, the near approach of which he bore with Roman constancy, or rather with christian patience. For there is still extant a kind of Ode that he is said to have composed in his last agonies, which very plainly proves, that his senses were perfectly sound, and the faculties of his mind not in the least impaired. He died October 25th 1400, in the full possession of that high reputation which his writings had deservedly acquired, and was buried in Westminster Abbey in the great south crofs-isle.—The sonnet or ode above alluded to consists of three stanzas only, and as well for the beauty of the piece, as for the extraordinary occasion on which it was written, *Dr Kippis* has deservedly given it a place in his *Biographia Britannica*.

Gode consaile of Chaucer :  
*Attempted in modern English.*

THE PORTS LAST ADVICE.

I.

Fly from the croud, and be to virtue true,  
Content with what tho<sup>u</sup> haft, tho<sup>u</sup> it be small.  
To hoard brings hate ; nor lofty thoughts pursue,  
He who climbs high endangers many a fall.  
Envy's a shade that ever waits on fame,  
And oft the sun that rises it will hide;  
Trace not in life a vast expensive scheme  
But be thy wishes to thy state ally'd.  
Be mild to others, to thyself severe ;  
So truth shall shield thee, or from hurt or fear.

II.

ed; and that he afterwards returned into England, upon the restoration of his patron to power and favour.—His literary character was truly illustrious ; it has been lately, and with great

## II.

Think not of bending all things to thy will,  
 Nor vainly hope that fortune shall befriend ;  
 Inconstant she, but be thou constant still,  
 Whate'er betide unto an honest end.  
 Yet needless dangers never madly brave,  
 Kick not thy naked foot against a nail ;  
 Or from experience the solution crave,  
 If wall and pitcher strive, which shall prevail ?  
 Be in thy cause, as in thy neighbours clear,  
 So truth shall shield thee, or from hurt or fear.

## III.

Whatever happens, happy in thy mind  
 Be thou, nor at thy lot in life repine,  
 He 'scapes all ill, whose bosom is resign'd,  
 Nor way, nor weather will be always fine.  
 Beside, thy home's not here, a journey this,  
 A pilgrim thou, then hie thee on thy way.  
 Look up to God, intent on heavenly bliss,  
 Take what the road affords and praises pay ;  
 Shun brutal lust, and seek thy soul's high sphere ;  
 So truth shall shield thee, or from hurt or fear.

In order to give likewise some specimen of his original composition, Chaucer's humorous *Address to his empty purse*, and his *laconic advice to his own amanuensis*, well deserve here to be recorded.

*Chaucer to his empie purse.*

To you my purse, and to none othir wight,  
 Complain I, for ye be my ladie dere,

ability displayed by such writers as a TYRWHIT and a WARTON : hence it is the less necessary, here, to enlarge upon it. Chaucer was skilled in all the learning of the age, and especially in astronomy,

I am sorie now that ye be so light,  
For certis ye now make me hevie chere ;  
Me were as lefe be laide upon a bere,  
For whiche unto your mercy thus I crie,  
Be hevy againe, or els mote I die.

Now vouchsafin this day or it be night  
That I of yow the blisful sowne may here,  
Or se your colour lyke the sonnè bright,  
That of yclownesse ne had nevir pere ;  
Ye be my life, ye be my hert'is stere ;  
Quene of comfort and of gode compayne,  
Be hevy againe, or els mote I die.

Nowe purse, that art to me my liv'is light,  
And fayvour, as downe in this worlde here,  
Oute of this townè helpe me by your might,  
Sithin that yow wol not be my tresoure,  
For I am shave as nighe as any frere,  
But I preyn unto your curtefye  
Be hevy againe, or els mote I die, &c,

*Chaucer's wordes unto his own Scrivenere.*

ADAM SCRIVENERE, yf ever it the befall  
Boece or Troiles for to write new  
Under thy longe lockes thou maist have the scalle,  
But after my makyng thou write more true,  
So oft adaye I mote thy werke renew  
It to correcte and eke to rubbe and scrape,  
And al is thorow thy negligence and rape.

The following lines are said to have been anciently upon Chaucer's tomb-stone.

GALFRIDUS

astronomy, as appears from his *Astrolabe*, in which he has collected whatever was valuable in the works of his predecessors who applied to the study of that science. He wrote in English prose as well as verse, being persuaded that it was the duty of able men to cultivate their native tongue; an opinion corresponding with the successful efforts of Petrarch in Italy, whose example he found worthy of imitation.'

‘Chaucer

GALFRIDUS CHAUCER, VATES ET FAMA POESIS  
MATERNÆ, HAC SACRA SUM TUMULATUS HOMO.

About the year 1555, Nicholas Brighman, a gentleman of Oxford, erected a handsome monument for Chaucer. His picture was taken from Occleve's book, together with the following inscription which still remains:

M. S.

Qui fuit Anglorum vates ter maximus olim  
Galfridus Chaucer conditur hoc tumulo:  
Annum si quæras Domini, si tempora vixit,  
Ecce notæ subfunt quæ tibi cuncta notunt.

25 Octobris, 1400.

A. *Ærumnarum requies mors.*  
N. Brigham bos fecit Musarum nomine sumptus.  
1556.

*In English thus:*

Of English bards who sang the sweetest strains,  
Old Geoffrey Chaucer now this tomb contains:  
For if death's date, if reader thou should'st call,  
Look but beneath and it will tell thee all.

25th of October, 1400.

Death is the repose of afflictions.

N. Brighman placed these in the name of the Muses at his own  
expence. 1556.

‘ Chaucer is entitled to eminent praise as a poet. He was endued with an uncommon genius, and shone in very different kinds of composition. His *Canterbury-tales* are master-pieces, which exhibit a wonderful variety of talents ; for they abound with the sublime and the pathetic, with admirable satire, genuine humour, and an uncommon knowledge of life. The stories told by the several guests are exactly suited to their characters, and clearly evince that the author, notwithstanding the aid he derived from his acquaintance with Italian literature, was possessed of a noble invention and a fruitful imagination. Whatever were the defects of his style, they were entirely the defects of the period in which he flourished. At the same time it has a claim to much higher praise than it has frequently received. His versification has been censured as deficient in harmony ; this charge has often proceeded from our unacquaintance with the structure of the language in that age, and with the manner in which it was pronounced. Chaucer is usually characterized as the Father of the English poetry : he was undoubtedly the first person in England, to whom the title of a poet, in its genuine lustre, could be applied with justice. He not only enriched our native tongue in general, but had the honour of establishing the English heroic verse, in which so many beautiful compositions have since appeared.’

‘ This illustrious man was uncommonly free in his religious sentiments ; he employed his talents with equal success in lashing the immoralities of the priests, and in covertly attacking some of the doctrines of the Church of Rome : nor has

has it been imagined without reason, that he was a great favourer, if not a direct follower of Wickliff.'

‘Another poet of this æra, who is entitled to considerable applause, is JOHN GOWER (6). He was the intimate friend of Chaucer, and co-operated with him in all his valuable designs. With respect to religion he was equally liberal in his sentiments ; so natural is the connection between genius and the love of liberty. Though he was much inferior to Chaucer in spirit,

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(6) Gower's chief work in English, is his *Confessio amantis*, or “ The lover's confession ;” it was finished in the year 1393. It is divided into eight books, first printed by Caxton in 1483. He wrote this poem at the desire of Richard II. who meeting our poet roving on the Thames, near London, invited him into the Royal barge, and after much conversation requested him to *book some new thing*. On this piece Gower's character and reputation as a poet, are almost entirely founded. It is a dialogue between a lover and his confessor who is a priest of Venus, and like the mystagogue in the PICTURE OF CEBES, is called Genius.—What Gower wanted in invention, he supplied from his common-place book, which appears to have been stored with an inexhaustible fund of instructive maxims, pleasant narrations, and philosophical definitions : hence his object to crowd all his erudition into this elaborate performance ; yet there is often some degree of contrivance and art in his manner of introducing and adapting subjects of a very distant nature, and which are totally foreign to his general design. (KIPPIS). That he was a man of judgment, appears from the circumstance of Chaucer's submitting his *Troilus* and *Cressida* to Gower's censure.—His munificence and piety were great ; he largely contributed to rebuild the conventual church of St Mary Overe in Southwark, in its present elegant form, and to render it a beautiful pattern of the lighter Gothic architecture at the same time he founded at his tomb a perpetual chantry, and died in 1402.

spirit, imagination, and elegance, his language is not destitute of perspicuity, and his versification is frequently harmonious. His erudition was very extensive, and accompanied with a knowledge of life. He critically cultivated his native tongue, that he might reform its irregularities, and establish an English style. His poems are distinguished for their moral merit. In short, if Chaucer had not existed, Gower would alone have been sufficient to rescue the age, in which he lived, from the imputation of barbarism.'

‘ In comparing the historians of this age with their predecessors, we cannot allow them equal merit in the same species of composition. The Compendium of THOMAS WICKES, which begins with the Conquest, and ends at the death of Edward I, is clear and full in its narration of several events. The Chronicle that goes under the name of JOHN BRUMPTON, is copious in its account of the Saxons, and transcribes many of their laws at large. HIGDEN, though a plagiary, preserves some facts which would otherwise have been lost. MATTHEW OF WESTMINSTER (7) concluded his Annals with the year 1307; but his work was continued by other hands, and particularly by ADAM DE MERIMUTH, to 1380.’

‘ This age also produced what was then extremely remarkable, an extensive and illustrious traveller. Such was SIR JOHN

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(7) A Benedictine monk and an accomplished scholar, who wrote this history from the beginning of the world, to the end of the reign of Edward I, under the title of *Flores Historiarum*; he died in 1380.

JOHN MANDEVILLE, a person descended from an ancient and noble family. He had received his education at the monastery of St. Albans, and applied himself for some time to the common studies of the day, and especially to physic; but at length he was seized with an invincible desire of visiting Asia and Africa. Having amply provided himself for the purpose, he set out upon his travels in 1332, and was absent from England *thirty-four years*. When he returned to his native country, he was scarcely known, as he had long been given up for dead, by his relations and friends. He became acquainted with many modern languages, in the course of his adventures, and wrote his Travels in Latin, French, and English. Several false and fanciful things are to be found in them, as he was extremely credulous, and tells us not only what he saw, but what he heard. In other respects, his accounts of the countries, which he visited, deserve attention; and, excepting PAULUS VENUTUS, he was the first man who communicated, to the Western Europeans, the knowledge of the remote parts of the world (8).

*Division Second; from 1399, to 1485.*

FROM HENRY IV. TO HENRY VII.

The period, in which Chaucer, Gower and Longlande flourished, was succeeded by an age that did not, in any tolerable

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(8) His rambling disposition did not suffer him to rest; for he left his native country a second time, and died at Liege in the Netherlands in 1372.

lerable degree, sustain the same reputation. There was only one poet in the reign of King HENRY IV, and he contributed nothing to the improvement of our versification and language. His real name was JOHN WALTON, though he is called *Ioannes Capellanus*. He translated into English verse BOETHIUS's “*Treatise on the Consolation of Philosophy*, a work of genius and merit, which in the middle ages, was admired above every other composition.”

“ HENRY V. though said to have been fond of reading, derives no lustre from his patronage of the fine arts, but from his character as a warrior. Although his coronation was attended with harpers, who must have accompanied their instruments with heroic rhymes, he was no great encourager of the popular minstrelsy, then in a high state of perfection. When, on his entrance into the city of London in triumph, after the battle of Agincourt, children had been placed to sing verses as he passed, an edict was issued by him, commanding that, for the future, no songs should be recited in praise of the late victory. This humility perhaps was affected; and, if it was real, does not appear to have been the result of true wisdom. While his inclinations directed him to pursue his eminent military achievements, he ought to have cherished the persons who were best able to do justice to his prowess. The little regard, however, which Henry paid to the poets, could not prevent them from celebrating his warlike actions. Among other productions, a minstrel-piece was composed on the siege of Harfleur, and the battle of Agincourt. It was adapted to the harp, and contained some spirited lines; but the

style was barbarous, compared with that of Chaucer and Gower. The improvement of our language was attended to only by a few men, who had enjoyed the advantages of a superior education, and made composition their study. As to the minstrels, they were, in general, too illiterate to search after the refinements of diction.'

'Concerning OCCLIVE, though of some note in the poetical history of this period, much cannot be said in his praise. His principal poem is a translation of EGIDIUS *on the Government of Princes*. Occlive did not excel in vigour of fancy, and there is no energy in his writings. He had, however, the merit of contributing to the improvement of our language. His pathetic lines on Chaucer, who was his model, and with whom he had probably formed a connection in early life, reflect honour upon the gratitude and sensibility of his heart.'

'JOHN LYDGATE (9), a monk of the Benedictine abbey of Bury in Suffolk, was the poet whose reputation stands the highest among the English bards of this age. He possessed the advantage of an education, not inferior to any that the times could afford. After having studied at the university of Ox-

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(9) At what time he retired to the convent of St. Edmund's-Bury, does not appear; but he was certainly there in 1415. He was living in 1446, aged about 66; but in what year he died, is not known.—Lydgate, according to Pits, was an elegant poet, a persuasive rhetorician, an expert mathematician, an acute philosopher, and a tolerable divine. He was a voluminous writer, and considering the age in which he lived, an excellent poet. His language is less obsolete, and his versification much more harmonious, than the language and versification of Chaucer, who wrote about half a century before him.

ford, he travelled for improvement into France and Italy. Here he acquired the knowledge, not only of the languages, but of the literature of these countries, and paid particular attention to the poetry of both nations. Besides obtaining an acquaintance with all the polite learning which was then cultivated, he was no inconsiderable proficient in the fashionable philosophy and theology of his cotemporaries. The vivacity of his genius, and the versatility of his talents, enabled him to write a great number of poems, extremely diversified in their subjects, and in the nature of their composition. His three chief productions were the "*Fall of Princes*," the "*Siege of Thebes*," and the "*Destruction of Troy*."—Lydgate also improved the English tongue; for his language is uncommonly perspicuous for the times in which he lived, and his verses frequently excite surprise by their modern cast. He seems to have been ambitious, at least in the structure and modulation of his style, of rivalling Chaucer; but undoubtedly he was far inferior to him in the grand requisites of poetical excellence. His mode of writing is diffuse, and he is not distinguished by animation or pathos. Nevertheless, he is not destitute of beauties, and his *Destruction of Troy*, in particular, displays much power of description, in conjunction with clear and harmonious numbers.

‘ If it were compatible with the nature of our design to enumerate names only, other persons might be added. We might mention HUGH CAMPEDEN, THOMAS CHESTER, JOHN HARDING (10), who wrote a Chronicle in Verse, and JOHN NORTON and

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(10) As a specimen of this chronicler's versification, may serve the

## ESSAYS, BY ADELUNG.

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and GEORGE RIPLEY, whose poems are didactic. It is scarcely expressing ourselves with propriety, to say that these men were mere versifiers. While they are totally void of the noble qualities which constitute genuine poetry, their versification is unpolished and barbarous. Harding should therefore be marked as an antiquary and an historian, and Norton and Ripley as chemical writers. The latter is understood to have been no mean proficient in the general literature of the times.

‘ However deficient the minstrels of this age might be in the excellencies of composition, they were great favourites with the nation at large. This is evident from the reward which they received for their attendance on particular solemnities. Superstitious as the body of the people were, they manifested greater liberality towards the administrators to their pleasures,

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the following curious lines, which Spelman has quoted in his  
“ *Vita Aelfredi.*” p. 191. Append.

“ Alfrede king was of this regioun  
That brother was to the noble Elthride,  
A perfect Clerk proved in opinion  
As Clerks could discern, and proved,  
In knighthood also approved and notified  
So plenerly, that no man knew his peer  
So good a knight he was and singulere.  
In batails many in his father’s daies  
And also in his brethren time all three  
He fought full ofte, and bare him wel alwaies,  
That for his dedes and singularitee  
He was commended among the emnitez  
Within the land and out, as well was know  
His fame among the people bye was blowe.”

than towards the leaders of their devotion. During one feast, while twelve priests had only four pence each for singing a dirge, the same number of minstrels were every one of them rewarded with two shillings and four pence, besides having entertainment provided for themselves and their horses. At another festival two shillings were given to the priests, and four to the minstrels ; and the latter were treated with the most distinguished marks of attention and respect.'

It is conjectured that the office of poet laureat originated in this period. An Italian who came into England and professed to be an imitator of the great Roman historian, Livy, assumed the name of Titus Livius, and was protected by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. He wrote, indeed, a judicious Epitome of Thomas de Elham's history, but did not attain either the elevation of sentiment or dignity of style, which so eminently distinguished the model he wished to follow. But the employment of a poet laureat, as held under the king, took its rise in the reign of EDWARD IV. and the first person thus appointed was JOHN KAY, of whom no composition is extant, which can be considered as asserting his claim to this character. The only work that remains of him, is an English translation in prose of a *History of the Siege of Rhodes*. A crown of laurel was sometimes conferred, in universities, on those who had distinguished themselves by their abilities in Latin composition, and especially in Latin verse. Hence the king's laureat might be nothing more than a graduate of this kind, employed in his majesty's service. The laureats appear originally to have written

written only in Latin, which custom is supposed to have continued till the time of the Reformation.'

' If the discoveries, professedly made some years ago at Bristol, in 1768, are to be credited, we must introduce the name of a poet far more excellent than any, whom we have yet mentioned, and who would confer honour on this age, infinitely greater than that to which hitherto it has established its title. Our readers must be sensible that we allude to the poems which CHATTERTON produced as the works of THOMAS ROWLEY, a secular priest in that city, in the fifteenth century. The full discussion of this subject, which affords a very curious literary problem, would be foreign to our design. We know that Chatterton, when little more than fifteen years of age, brought to his friends certain manuscripts, and a great number of poems, said to have been transcribed from manuscripts, all of which were alleged to have been found in an old chest in the bellfry of St Mary Redcliffe church, and to contain the genuine productions of this Rowley. We know that these poems are, in many respects, uncommonly beautiful; and that there is something very extraordinary in them, if they were the compositions of a stripling who had no other advantages of education than what could be derived from the instruction of a common charity-school. We know that they exhibit such marks of knowledge, and are otherwise accompanied with circumstances of so surprising a nature, that it has been deemed not only a matter of astonishment, but even of impossibility, that they should be written by Chatterton. We know that the authenticity of them, and the existence of Rowley,

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ley, have been maintained by some able and learned men, with no small degree of acuteness and ingenuity. On the other hand, very important arguments and authorities have been urged to prove that they are of modern fabrication. That there ever was such a person as Rowley, has been called in question, and still more, that there could be any poet of that name in the fifteenth century, who was capable of producing the works ascribed to him. It is asked, how he could possibly have been concealed till within these few years, and how he could avoid being celebrated, in the highest terms of applause, by his own contemporaries, and by every succeeding age. As to the manuscripts asserted to have been discovered by Chatterton, doubts, which will not admit of an easy solution, have been raised with regard to the truth of the fact. Independently of all these considerations, it is alleged, that the poems themselves afford the most decisive internal evidence of their being recent productions. This has been argued, with great force of reasoning, from a variety of concurring circumstances. The style, composition, sentiments, and measure, carry in them the marks of a refinement that was wholly unknown at the period, in which they are professedly written. In the abstraction of ideas, in the studied forms of diction, in the harmony of the versification, we are constantly reminded of our latest poets. The stanza principally used was not known in this country till the time of Prior. That such a regular piece as the *Tragedy of Ella* should come from Rowley, at the period pretended, is absolutely contrary to every thing of the dramatic kind, which existed at that period. The fact seems to

to have been that Chatterton originally wrote the poems in the present English language, and afterwards inserted the old words from glossaries and dictionaries. It is remarkable that when we peruse Rowley with dean Mills's learned notes, the moment we turn our eyes from the commentary to the text, the modern air of the latter strikes us in so forcible a manner, that the dean's elaborate arguments lose all power of conviction. It must be added, that many undeniable proofs have been exhibited of the most direct imitation of recent poets, even to the adoption of their very words. These and other considerations have induced a large majority of our ablest antiquaries and critics totally to deny the authenticity of the compositions in question. Should it, however, be allowed, that certain ancient manuscripts were discovered, and that some of them contained fragments in verse, written in the age pretended, Rowley, as we now have him, appears in too questionable a shape to give the fifteenth century the honour of the works published under his name.'

'But while—Rowley being rejected—it will be found that little true poetry flourished in England during the present period, if we direct our view to the northern kingdom of Great Britain, we shall meet with distinguished excellence in a person of the highest station, the sovereign of the country. It is JAMES I. of Scotland, who introduced a new literary epocha in the nation, over which he reigned. What originally was a great misfortune to this prince, and a flagrant act of injustice towards him, turned out, in one respect, eminently to his own service, and highly to the advantage of his country. When

he was only a youth of thirteen, he was treacherously taken prisoner by the English, and detained, during the term of eighteen years in a confinement which was often very strict and rigid. His education, however, good rudiments of which he had received in Scotland, was not neglected, but attended to with the utmost care. The person appointed to be his governor, was Sir John Pelham, a gentleman of worth and literature, who omitted nothing that could tend to form the mind and manners of his royal charge. James, being blessed with an admirable genius, and enjoying the ablest masters of the time, made an uncommon proficiency both in bodily exercises and in mental acquirements. To his knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, the last of which he is represented as having written with ease, he added an acquaintance with the philosophy of the age. But the studies, to which he was more particularly devoted, were those of poetry and music. These liberal and pleasing arts formed, in his long and close captivity, the principal consolation of his solitary hours. When he was restored to the possession of his throne, from which he had been so unjustly withheld, his grand object was to enlighten and civilize his countrymen. Many of his exertions to this purpose were accompanied with such a degree of success, that he may be said to have given a new turn to the genius of Scotland. His exertions and success would have been still greater and more illustrious, if he had not been cruelly murdered in the forty-fourth year of his age. Various works were written by him, both in prose and verse, most of which are unfortunately lost: those which still exist,

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are of a poetical nature; and it is certain that several of his compositions of this kind are now no longer in being. Four of James's pieces, which have happily escaped the depredations of time, are a "Song on his Mistress;" "The King's Quair;" "Peblis to the Play;" and "Christ's Kirk on the Green." The King's Quair is a poem of large extent, being divided into six cantos. Its theme is the royal author's love to Jane, daughter to the Earl of Sommerset; a beautiful lady, of whom he became enamoured while a prisoner at the castle of Windsor, and who was afterwards his queen. The misfortunes of his youth, his early and long captivity, the incidents which gave rise to his passion, its purity, constancy and happy issue, are all displayed in the mode of allegorical vision, agreeably to the reigning taste of the age. That the merit of the King's Quair is very great, cannot be denied. It is distinguished by its invention and fancy, by its genuine simplicity of sentiment, and by the felicity of its poetical descriptions: Several men of ingenuity and taste have contended; that James is little, if at all, inferior to Chaucer. If the former's "Court of Venus" be compared to the latter's "Court of Love," the royal author will lose nothing by the comparison. The Jane, in particular, of King James, is painted with a beauty and delicacy that are not equalled in Chaucer's Rosial. It is to be lamented, that many of the graces of the King's Quair are concealed, at least from common view, in the antiquity of the language.'

• Three other Scottish poets are named in this period, but they are, on the whole, contemptible, when compared with

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the monarch of the country.. ANDREW WINTON, a canon regular of St Andrew's, and Prior of the monastery in Lochleven, and who preceded James I, wrote in verse a very large Chronicle of Scotland. His work, which is valuable, so far as it relates to his own country, and which contains materials not to be met with in Fordun, whom he had never seen, has not yet been published. Its publication would be a desirable accession to the history of North Britain \*. HOLLAND was the author of a poem entitled " The Howlat," which appears to have described the poetical employments, and the musical entertainments of the age. HENRY the Minstrel, who, on account of his being blind from his birth, is usually called the BLIND HARRY, composed the " Life of Wallace." It is a romance, like Barbour's Bruce, but not to be ranked with it in point of excellence. At the same time, it is not destitute of merit, and there are various things in it, which cannot fail to gratify the curiosity of the antiquary and the critic.'

' CAXTON † comes before us in the character of an author,

as

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\* It has since been published at London, in 2 Vols. 8vo.

† WILLIAM CAXTON, a mercer of London, eminent for the books he published, and for being reputed the first who practised the art of printing in England. He died at a very advanced age, probably above eighty, in 1494.—Much cannot be said in his praise as an author; for his language is rather uncouth; of which the following is a specimen, extracted from his Chronicle :

" King Alfred reigned 30 years, and a good king he had been, and wel coude chastise his enemies, for he was a good Clerc and let make many bokes. And a boke he made of English of aven-  
tures of Kings, and of batails that had ben done in the lond : and many other bokes of gestes he let hem wriite that were of  
grete

as well as in that of a printer. He is reckoned among the historians of his age ; but in this respect he is entitled to a very small degree of applause. His chief merit is that of a translator. The books printed by him, were more than fifty in number ; some of them very large volumes ; and many of them were versions from foreign writers, made by himself.'

' Among the patrons of learning, in this period, the name of HUMPHREY, *Duke of Gloucester*, stands foremost ; a man of an amiable character in our civil history. He is celebrated by Occleve as a singular promoter of literature, and the common patron of the scholars of the times. Besides him two other names ought to be mentioned, whose merits were great and eminent. JOHN TIPTOT~~T~~, *Earl of Worcester*, and ANTHONY WIDVILLE, *Earl Rivers*, were not only protectors and promoters of science, but writers themselves. So eminently was the former at the head of literature, and so masterly an orator, that when, upon a visit to Rome, he delivered an oration before Pope Pius II, he drew tears of joy and admiration from that celebrated and learned pontiff. The light in which he is now only known to us by his own works, is that of a translator. Of his original productions no more than a few letters and small pieces are remaining in manuscript. Anthony Widville, greatly to his honour, was the friend of Caxton, whose new art he patronized with zeal and liberality. The second book printed in England was a work of Earl Rivers's.

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grete wisdom and good lerning ; thurgh which booke many a man  
may him amende that will hem reade."

W.

Rivers's. He also employed himself principally in translations, according to the fashion of the times, and what was then the best mode of conveying instruction to the kingdom. Besides these he wrote several ballads against the seven deadly sins.—Imperfect as the writings of Tiptoft and Widville may now be deemed, great praise is due to them for their zealous endeavours to promote the cause of learning, and to spread among their countrymen a regard to mental accomplishments. The examples of men so illustrious could not fail of producing some good effects. It must ever be lamented that these two eminent noblemen met with so untimely and unhappy an end; both of them having been beheaded when they were little more than forty years of age.'

‘Another author deserves to be recorded at the conclusion of this period, not indeed on account of great merit, but for the sake of her sex. This was JULIANA BERNERS, prioress of Sopewell Nunnery, near St. Albans. She did not employ herself altogether in penning devout meditations and rules of holy living, but being a woman of rank and spirit, she wrote on hawking, hunting and fishing. That part which relates to hunting is in rhyme. This lady is the second, at least in point of time, of any of our female writers, and the first who appeared in print.’

‘To the number of historians of this age, whose works were composed in Latin, we must add the name of ROBERT FABIAN, who wrote in English.\* He was a merchant and alderman of London, and consequently a member of a corporation which has produced few literary men, and in which

many

many learned characters are not, in the nature of the thing, to be expected. His situation, therefore, in life, especially considering the age in which he lived, may be regarded as giving a certain degree of celebrity to his historical character. The Chronicle of his composition is entitled by him the *Concordance of Sins* ;" it is apparently written with sincerity, and its language is intelligible. Besides the more public facts which it includes, it contains a variety of particulars relative to the city of London. As Fabian's work is carried down to the twentieth year of the reign of HENRY VII. he may in part be considered as belonging to the following period.'

In the manners ; in the political constitutions ; in the customs ; and consequently also in the languages of almost every European nation, great changes are discoverable during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These changes cannot be explained otherwise than from the constant increase of population. The order of knighthood, which hitherto had been the only pride of nations, began much to decline ; on the other hand, the lower classes of the people, till then very much oppressed, recovered from their abject servitude, and formed a happy middle rank which soon became the seat of inventive genius, of thriving commerce, of the arts, and the sciences. The influence thus occasioned in language, will be easily recognized by him who is acquainted with the exact relation which languages bear to the whole circuit of ideas, and the degree of taste prevailing in a nation. The question, here, relates only to the English language, the progress of which, during the fourteenth century, particularly towards the end of it, was indeed very remarkable. The stock of words it contained, had now become too small and insufficient to express the accession

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acception of many new ideas ; and therefore its continual augmentation from the French, with which it had already fraternized in the preceding ages, may be without difficulty understood.

*Division Third ; from 1485 to 1558 : or*

*From HENRY VII. to the end of Q. MARY.*

‘ Of the English poets in the reign of Henry VII, the writer who best deserved that name was STEPHEN HAWES : he was patronized by this monarch. One of his principal productions was entitled the “ Temple of Glasse ;” which was founded upon Chaucer’s “ House of Fame.” Previous to Hawes, for almost a century, nothing had appeared but Legends, Homilies, and Chronicles in verse. His capital performance, however, was the “ *Passetyme of Pleasure.*” In this poem there is an effort of imagination and invention ; and it contains some striking instances of romantic and allegoric fiction. In point of versification, he improved upon Lydgate, and was superior to that poet in genius and fancy. In the harmony of numbers, and clearness of expression he also excelled his immediate predecessors and cotemporaries.’

‘ Another poet who flourished in this reign was ALEXANDER BARCLAY. His principal work is the “ *Skip of Fooles.*” It was chiefly taken from a German original, and from two translations of that original, one in French and the other in Latin. Barclay made, however, some additions of his own.—The language of this writer is more cultivated than that of many of his cotemporaries, and he had the honour of contributing somewhat to the improvement of the phraseology of his country

try. Besides other pieces, Barclay was the author of five Eclogues, which were the first of the kind in the English tongue. They were formed upon the plan of Petrarch and Mantuan, being of a moral and satirical nature, and containing but few strokes of rural description and bucolic imagery.'

' JOHN ALCOCK, independently of his character as a divine and a bishop, was in many respects a man of distinguished abilities. And though he wrote upon the Penitential Psalms in English verse, we cannot presume to rank him as a poet.'

' Three versifiers in this period, WILLIAM WALTER, HENRY MEDWALL, and LAWRENCE WADE, scarcely deserve any notice.—The dramatic entertainments called "*Moralities*," appear to have been carried to their height about the close of the present reign. A great contriver of them was JOHN RASTALL, a learned printer, and brother-in-law to Sir Thomas More. This sort of spectacle had hitherto been confined, either to moral allegory or to religion blended with buffoonery; but Raftall formed the design of rendering it the vehicle of science and philosophy.'

' To Scotland we stand indebted for names, in Henry the Seventh's reign, which are unrivalled in England. That country produced writers who adorned the age with a degree of sentiment and spirit, a command of phraseology, and a fertility of imagination, not, perhaps, to be found even in Chaucer or Lydgate. These writers exhibited striking specimens of allegorical invention, a mode of composition which for some time had been almost totally extinguished in England. WILL-

LIAM DUNBAR and GAWIN DOUGLAS are the two principal persons to whom this high praise is due.<sup>1</sup>

‘ Dunbar, the chief of the ancient Scottish poets, wrote a considerable number of poems, the two longest of which, and the most celebrated are “ The Thistle and the Rose,” and “ The Golden Targe.” The former was occasioned by an event which ultimately produced the union of the two crowns and kingdoms; namely the marriage of James IV of Scotland, with Margaret Tudor, the eldest daughter of Henry VII of England. In the latter he endeavours to shew the gradual and imperceptible influence of love, when too far indulged over reason.—Dunbar unites in himself, and generally surpasses, the qualities of the chief English poets; the mōrals and satire of Langland; Chaucer’s humour, poetry and knowledge of life; the allegory of Gower; the description of Lydgate.’

‘ Douglas attained to great excellence in classical learning. This, in conjunction with the natural vigour of his mind, enabled him to sustain a new character, that of a poetical translator, not from the old French metrical romances, but from the models of the Augustan age. In his early youth, he translated Ovid’s *Art of Love*; but he afterwards raised his thoughts to a much nobler and more difficult undertaking, which was a cōplete translation in heroic verse, of the *Eneid* of Virgil. The design, which had long been entertained by him, was accomplished in the space of sixteen months, and it is executed with equal spirit and fidelity. Dr Johnson represents Mr Pope’s version of Homer, as a very important object

ject in the history of the literature of this country, though it was performed at the time, when learning and taste were in a high state of cultivation in England. What, then, are we to think of such a work as that of Gawin Douglas's in a period comparatively rude and unpolished? No metrical translation of a Classic had yet appeared in English, unless we are disposed to give that appellation to Boethius. Virgil was hitherto generally known only by Caxton's romance on the subject of the *Aeneid*; concerning which Douglas asserted, *that it no more resembled Virgil than the devil was like St Austin.*

Henry, Earl of Sinclair, was the particular friend and patron of Gawin Douglas; for it was at the Earl's request that Douglas undertook the translation of the *Aeneid*; though he is eminent not only as a translator, but as an original writer. His allegorical poems, "King Hart," and "Palice of Honour" excel in the same species of composition;—the several books of his translation of Virgil are introduced with metrical prologues, which display a most extraordinary degree of poetical beauty. Milton's *L'Allegro*, and *Il Penitent* have been reckoned the earliest descriptive poems in English. If that was the case, Scotland produced the finest examples of this delightful species of composition, nearly a century and a half before.'

‘An illustrious lady must be mentioned as an author as well as a patroness of letters; MARGARET, Countess of Richmond and Derby, the mother of Henry VII. In point of time, she succeeds Julia Bergers, being the third female writer in England. Her works were chiefly translations of the devotional

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kind ; though she, likewise, at the desire of her son the king, drew up orders with regard to the precedence of great and noble ladies, at public processions, and especially at funerals.'

' At the time when the nobility in general were involved in gross ignorance, Algernon Percy, the fifth Earl of Northumberland distinguished himself by being the protector of genius. SKELTON was encouraged by him to write an elegy on the death of his father ; but what particularly marked the Earl's literary taste and his love for poetry, was a very splendid manuscript transcribed for his use, containing a large collection of English poems, finely engrossed on vellum and superbly illuminated.'

' The prime glory of the reign of Henry VIII, with respect to Polite Literature, was SIR THOMAS MORE. Though, according to Mr Hume, there was no man in this age who had the least pretension to be ranked among our classics, he acknowledges that Sir Thomas seems to come nearest to that character : with all his religious weaknesses, he was, indeed, one of the greatest ornaments of his time. "Sir Thomas More," says Mr Warton, " is reverenced by posterity as the scholar who taught that erudition which civilized his country, and as the philosopher who met the horrors of the block with that fortitude which is equally free from ostentation and enthusiasm : as the man whose genius overthrew the fabric of false learning, and whose amiable tranquillity of temper triumphed over the malice and injustice of tyranny." His Utopia may be regarded as an ethical as well as a political composition. His history of the reigns of Edward V. and Richard

III, is far from being esteemed among the best of his productions.—The historical works of JOHN RASTALL, GEORGE LILLY, and EDWARD HALL, have little claim to notice ; though Hall is of some use to the antiquary ; by the attention which he pays to the variations of dress and of fashion.'

' This period was not unfruitful with regard to poetical writers. JOHN SKELTON \* exceeded the licentiousness of the times, and was censured by his cotemporaries. His characteristic vein of humour is capricious and extravagant ; his subjects are often ridiculous ; and his matter is sometimes debased by his versification. In a short ode, which was composed by him, he has exhibited a specimen of the structure and phraseology of a love-sonnet, about the beginning of the sixteenth century. Notwithstanding his scurility, he was a classical scholar.'

' Moralities still continued to hold their rank among the principal entertainments of the times, and they were represented by different bodies of men. When more regular plays came to be composed, some of them were acted at the Inns of Court. At these seminaries, masques and interludes were occasionally performed, during several succeeding reigns. The first instance of this kind, that is particularly recorded, occurs in 1527, when a comedy written by JOHN ROOS, a serjeant at law,

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\* The editor of the *Muses Library* (E. Cooper) calls Skelton the restorer of invention in *English* poetry. Among his numerous performances, "The Crown of Laurel," is one of the best, and he displays in it considerable wit and humour ; he died at Westminster Abbey, 1529.

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law; was represented in the great hall of the society at Gray's Inn.'

'HENRY HOWARD\*, Earl of Surrey, was a poet of a character far superior to that of Skelton. This accomplished nobleman led the way to great improvements in English poetry. Some of his stanzas approach to the ease and gallantry of Waller, and exhibit specimens of correct versification, polished language, and musical modulation. It is remarkable, that his translation of the second and fourth books of Virgil's *Aeneid* is the first composition in blank verse that occurs in the English language.'

'SIR THOMAS WYAT's genius was of the moral and didactic kind; and his poems are more distinguished by good sense, satire and observations on life, than by pathos or imagination. He may justly be esteemed the first polished English satirist.—There was an inviolable friendship between Wyat and Surrey, arising perhaps chiefly from a similarity of studies. Besides adopting the same principal subject for their poetry, the passion of love, they were alike anxious to improve their native language, and to attain the elegancies of composition.'

'Other poets of this period, and of high rank, were SIR FRANCIS

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\* He was the first of the English Noblemen, who distinguished himself by a fellowship with the muses. In purity of language and sweetness of sound, he far surpassed his contemporaries and predecessors. (E. Cooper). His imprudence, in adding some part of the Royal arms to his own, being descended from the heroic King Edward I, cost him his head; though justified by the Heralds. He was executed January 19, 1547.

FRANCIS BRYANT, the friend of Wyat, GEORGE BOLEYN, VISCOUNT ROCHFORD, brother to Queen Ann Boleyn ; and NICHOLAS LORD VAUX, an eminent statesman and soldier.— In Tottel's collection of the poetical writings of this period, is found the first example, that is known in our language, of the pure and unmixed pastoral. It is an example, likewise, of extraordinary merit. In ease of numbers, elegance of rural allusion, and simplicity of imagery, there is nothing of the kind equal to it in Spencer. The same collection affords one of the earliest instances of the painted English epigram ; and it is supposed that it came from the pen of Sir Thomas More. Several poems, which were chiefly the performances of his youth, were written by Sir Thomas in his native tongue.'

‘ NICHOLAS GRIMOALD was the next English poet, after the Earl of Surrey, who wrote in blank verse ; he gave to this new mode of versification, additional strength, elegance, and modulation. Grimoald wrote, likewise in rhyme ; in which respect he is inferior to none of his cotemporaries, for a masterly choice of chaste expression, and the concise elegancies of didactic versification. Some of his couplets have the smartness which marks the modern style of sententious poetry.’

‘ ANDREW BORDE, JOHN BALE, BRIAN ANSLEY, ANDREW CHERTSEY, WILFRID HOLME, CHARLES BARNESLEY, and EDWARD HALIWELL, were poets of a subordinate class in this period, of whom it is sufficient to mention their names.’

JOHN HETWOOD, commonly called the Epigrammatist, is represented by some as the first writer of comedies in England. Though moralities and interludes were written and performed

long

long before the time of Heywood, it must be allowed, that he is among the first of our dramatists who drove the Bible from the stage, and introduced representations of familiar life and popular manners.'

' The poetry of Scotland during the reign of Henry VIII. was much declining. The writings of SIR DAVID LINDSAY were very numerous and extremely popular, on account of their being applied to the purposes of the Reformation. Another Scots poet of this period was SIR JAMES INGLIS. His principal performance, the "Complaint of Scotland" is well written for the time, and displays abundance of learning. In one of his compositions he mentions a number of poets of his country as then living, that is, about the year 1530. These are, CULROSE, KYD, STEWART, STEWART OF LORN, GALBREITH, KINLOCH, and BALLENTYNE. Concerning four of these persons, nothing is known. Lord Hailes has published some pieces of the Stewarts; and Ballentyne, must mean JOHN BALLENDEN, the translator of Hector Boethius's History of Scotland, in which work he has interspersed several poems, and particularly one entitled "Virtue and Vyce," which has been reprinted. The author of the article concerning Ballenden, in the Biographia Britannica, represents his writings as distinguished by that noble enthusiasm which is the very soul of poesy.'

' About this time was produced, by an unknown writer, a comedy called *Pilotas*, which is extremely valuable for its curious pictures of life, manners, dress, and other circumstances relative to the age in which it was composed.'

‘ Among the number of noble authors in the time of Henry VIII, the names of LORD MORLEY, and JOHN BOURCHIER, Lord Berners, still deserve honourable mention. The former appears to have been a multifarious writer, in prose and verse ; he chiefly distinguished himself as a translator, and certainly was one of the most learned noblemen of that age. The latter also translated Froissart’s Chronicle, by the command of the king, besides which he was the translator of some French, Italian, and Spanish novels.—The only circumstance that entitles JOHN LORD LUMLEY to the appellation of an author, is his having translated into English, Erasmus’s Institution of a Christian Prince.’

‘ This æra was likewise adorned with some female authors of high rank. The principal of these were, CATHERINE PARR, the last wife of Henry VIII, and MARGARET ROPER, the favourite daughter of Sir Thomas More. The works of the former, which were partly originals and partly translations, are entirely of a religious nature : the compositions of the latter were not confined to the English language ; for she wrote the Latin with no small degree of elegance.’

‘ Some idea of the literary character and taste of an age may be formed from the nature of its publications. The works issued by the press, were numerous ; and among these, controversial treatises and devotional writings held a principal place. It is surprising what a number of law books appeared in this period.—Magna Charta was so often reprinted that it may hence be judged, that our ancestors were extremely attentive

to, and had a high value for that grand security of English liberty.'

'Sir JOHN CHEKE can never be mentioned with too much respect; as one of those who first introduced genuine literature into this country. In a plan of innovation, which he had formed with regard to the orthography of the English language, he was neither so happy, nor so successful, as he had been in restoring the pronunciation of the Greek and Latin tongues.'

'Sir THOMAS SMITH also directed his attention to his native language, which he was solicitous to refine and to polish. He published a treatise, the object of which was to promote the correct writing of the English tongue, and the true soundings of the letters and words. If he carried the matter to some degree of excess, and proposed alterations that would not be productive of much advantage, he has only erred in common with other ingenious and learned men.'

'ROGER ASCHAM was an excellent composer in his own tongue. Sir Thomas More excepted, he was perhaps the first of our scholars, who ventured to break the shackles of Latinity, by publishing his *Toxophilus* in English. This he did with a view of giving a pure and correct model of English composition, or rather of shewing how a subject might be treated with grace and propriety, in English as well as in Latin. His *Vindication* of his conduct, in attempting so great an innovation, displays the soundness and strength of his understanding. Dr. Johnson observes of Roger Ascham, that his philological learning would have gained him honour in any country; and that among us it may justly call for that reverence

reverence which all nations owe to those who first rouse them from ignorance, and kindle among them the light of literature.'

'The poetical annals of EDWARD VI. are marked with metrical translations of various parts of Scripture. Of these the chief is the verification of the Psalms by STERNHOLD and HOPKINS, a performance which is entitled to no regard from its own merit. Wyat and Surrey had before translated some of the Psalms into metre; but THOMAS STERNHOLD was the first whose metrical version of them was used in the church of England. His co-adjutor, JOHN HOPKINS, was rather a better poet than himself. His other assistants were, THOMAS NORTON, and WILLIAM WYTTINGHAM, afterwards Dean of Durham. The spirit of verifying the Psalms, and other parts of the Bible, was generally diffused at the beginning of the reformation; and among the rest that employed themselves in this way, were WILLIAM HUNIS, WILLIAM BALDWIN, FRANCIS SEAGER, and MATTHEW PARKER, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury. Another contributor to the metrical theology was ROBERT CROWLEY, an Oxford Divine; and another still more extraordinary one was CHRISTOPHER TYE, a Doctor of Music at Cambridge. Tye projected a translation of the Acts of the Apostles into familiar metre, of which he completed only the first fourteen chapters. The Book of Kings had before been verified by another hand. Dr. Tye carried his absurdity so far as to set his version to music; and his Acts of the Apostles were sung for a time in the royal chapel of Edward VI. Even this good king himself is to be ranked among the religious poets of his reign.'

Among the anonymous poems of this period, we may reckon the first drinking ballad of any merit, in the English language, which appeared in the year 1551. It has a vein of ease and humour, superior to what might have been expected in those times ; and it may be considered as the parent of many pleasing compositions, which have highly contributed to convivial entertainment. This ballad opens the second act of "Gammer Gurton's Needle," a comedy written and printed in the year just mentioned, and which was soon afterwards acted at Christ's-College in Cambridge. It is the first English play which was neither mystery nor morality, and which handles a comic story with some disposition of plot, and some discrimination of character. Earlier in the reign of Edward VI, we find a poet of the name of KELTON, who wrote the " Chronicle of the Brutes," in English verse.'

King EDWARD VI. stands in the list of royal authors, and he is justly entitled to that distinction. Considering the times in which he lived, and the early period of his death, his Journal of his own reign, his Remains, and his other compositions display such a promise, and indeed such a profession of abilities, as add greatly to the regret arising from his premature decease.—The Duke of SOMERSET has obtained a place among the noble writers of the age. His principal title to this honour is founded on one or two religious pieces, which were penned during his troubles.—EDMUND LORD SHEFFIELD is said to have composed a book of Sonnets in the Italian manner.—HENRY LORD STAFFORD, and FRANCIS

HASTINGS,

HASTINGS, second Earl of Huntingdon, exerted their talents only as translators.'

'The female authors belonging to this short period, are considerable in number, and eminent for their station. The principal of them are, QUEEN MARY, Lady JANE GREY, MARY ROPER, and Lady ELIZABETH FANE. Several other ladies of high rank distinguished themselves as translators from, and into, the Greek and Latin languages; among these we find Lady JOANNA LUMLEY, and Lady MARY HOWARD, Duchess of Norfolk.'

'Under Queen Mary, notwithstanding the wretched situation of the public, arising from the horrid persecutions which bigotry was carrying into execution, poetry assumed a higher tone. A poem was planned, though not fully completed, which sheds no common lustre on the dark interval between Surrey and Spenser. This poem was entitled "A Mirrour for Magistrates," and in the composition of it more writers than one were concerned. Its primary inventor, however, and most distinguished contributor, was THOMAS SACKVILLE, afterwards Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset, and who in the next reign will come before us as the author of the first genuine English tragedy. The object of the "Mirrour for Magistrates," was to make all the illustrious but unfortunate characters in our history to pass in review before the poet, who descends, like Dante, into the infernal regions, and is conducted by Sorrow. A poetical preface called an "Induction," and one Legend, which is the life of Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, were the only parts executed by Sackville. The

completion of the whole was recommended by him to Baldwyn, before mentioned, and **GEORGE FERRERS**, who carried it into execution, with the assistance of **CHURCHYARD**, **PHAYER**, **SKELTON**, **SEAGERS**, and **CAVYL**. Among these finishers of the “*Mirrour for Magistrates*,” Ferrers was the most eminent in point of abilities; but he composed no more than three of the *Legends*, far the greater number of them having been written by Baldwyn. As to the poetical merit of the work, it rests almost entirely with **LORD BUCKHURST**, whose *Induction* and *Story of the Duke of Buckingham* contain many proofs of a vigorous fancy, and many splendid passages.’

‘ Another poet of this period was **RICHARD EDWARDS**, whose principal work was the “*Paradise of daintie Devises*.” What chiefly entitles him to notice is, that he was one of the earliest of our dramatic writers, after the reformation of the British stage.—In **THOMAS TUSSER** we meet with, perhaps, the first exhibition of didactic poetry in this country. He was the author of a work in rhyme, the title of which was, “*Five Hundred points of good Husbandrie*,” and which has more in it of the simplicity of Hesiod, than of the elegance of Virgil. Indeed, it is so destitute of poetical ornaments, that its sole value arises from its being a genuine picture of agriculture, the rural arts, and the domestic œconomy and customs of our ancestors.—**WILLIAM FORREST** brings up the rear of our poets, but with no degree of splendour. He composed, in octave rhyme, a panegyrical history of the life of Catherine, the first Queen of Henry VIII. His other poems do not deserve a distinct specification.’

‘ The

‘ The only Scotch poet we shall now take notice of, is ALEXANDER SCOT, the Anacreon of his time and country. If the age in which he lived be considered, his pieces are correct and elegant. He wrote chiefly upon subjects of love, and stands at the head of the ancient minor poets of Scotland.’

*Division Fourth; from 1558, to 1625; or*

During the reigns of Q. ELIZABETH and King JAMES I.

‘ In a scene of great and unavoidable theological disputation, the scholars of England were obliged to direct their principal attention to objects that were esteemed of infinite importance; and consequently they had not much leisure for researches into the niceties of languages and learning. We have no names in Elizabeth’s reign, that can be compared with Sir John Cheke, Thomas Smith, and Roger Ascham, whom, in the preceding Division of this History, we have mentioned as eminent improvers of classical taste. Smith and Ascham may in part be considered as belonging to the reign of Elizabeth; for Smith’s “ Treatise on the proper mode of writing the English language,” was not published till the year 1568; and “ Ascham’s Schoolmaster” was first printed in 1573.’

‘ One circumstance, which contributed to the increase of knowledge in general, and to the improvement of the English language in particular, was the multiplicity of translations. This multiplicity constitutes a striking feature in the literary character of the age. On the benefits, which may be derived from translations, it is needless to enlarge. Besides the great

store

store of materials, scientific, literary, and entertaining, which they import into a country, they promote a more accurate acquaintance with the language from which they are made, and enrich the tongue into which they are rendered. A much superior advantage might have resulted from them, at the time we are treating of, if our writers had been better judges of the subject, and if they had not, in particular, most of them, entertained an opinion, that it was necessary for versions to be strictly literal.'

The Greek authors, which now appeared in English translations, were briefly the following. Ten books of Homer's Iliad, from a metrical French version of that work; by ARTHUR HALL: a complete and regular version of Homer, from the original; by GEORGE CHAPMAN: *Musæus* (according to a poetical passage of Drayton); by the same author: the Jocasta, or the *Phænissæ* of Euripides; by GEORGE GASCOIGNE, and FRANCIS KINWELMERSH: Aristotle's famous treatise on the ten categories; by BARNABY GOOGE; seven orations of Demosthenes; by THOMAS WILSON: Herodian's History, from a Latin version of Angelus Politianus; by NICHOLAS SMITH: Xenophon's Institution of Cyrus, from the original; by WILLIAM BERCHER, or as he is called in another edition of the book, Wylliam Barkar: the Table of Cebes, from a Latin version; by Sir ANTHONY POYNGZ. It is the first translation of Cebes that appeared in the English language.—ABRAHAM FLEMING, who was a frequent translator, among other works, produced in English, Aelian's various History. Something, likewise, of Isocrates came from the same hand; and also Synesius's Panegyric on Baldness, which had

had been brought into fashion by Erasmus's *Encomium on Folly*. Fleming was of considerable service to the literature of his country, by rendering into English many celebrated books, which had been written in Latin about the fifteenth century, and at the restoration of learning.—The only remaining translation from the Greek, of which we are able to give an account, is that of the ten books of Heliodorus's *Ethiopic History*; by THOMAS UNDERDOWNE. By the publication of this work, a new field of romance was opened, which is supposed to have suggested to Sir PHILIP SIDNEY the scheme of his *Arcadia*.<sup>1</sup>

‘The translations from the Latin poets were more numerous than from the Greek. Seneca's ten tragedies were translated by different poets, at different times; and they were printed together in 1581. The *Hyppollitus*, the *Medea*, the *Hercules Oeteus*, and the *Agamemnon* were translated by JOHN STUDLEY; the *Octavia*, by THOMAS NUCE, or NEWCE; the *Oedipus*, by ALEXANDER NEVYLE, who, in the fifteenth year of his age, produced the most spirited and elegant version in the collection; the *Hercules Furens*, the *Thyestes* and the *Troas* of Seneca, by JASPER HEYWOOD, son of John Heywood the Epigrammatist; and lastly, the *Thebais*, by THOMAS NEWTON, the publisher of the whole.’

‘Early in Queen Elizabeth's reign, the first four books of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* were translated by ARTHUR GOLDING; and in a short time afterwards, he completed the whole. His style is poetical and spirited; he excelled many of his contemporaries as a translator and a poet; his versions of many modern Latin writers were then of considerable utility, as

being adapted to the condition and opinions of the times. The Fasti of Ovid were rendered into English verse by an author whose name does not appear; and THOMAS UNDERDOWNE not only gave a translation of the Ibis, but illustrated it with annotations.—CHRISTOPHER MARLOE was so void of principle and decency, as to translate the elegies of the same poet; the elegant language of which can make no atonement for their obscenities.—Ovid's Remedy of Love met with an anonymous translator. A version of the Heroical Epistles was published by THOMAS TUBERVILLE.—There exists, it is said, one of Ovid's Epistles translated by the accomplished Earl of Effex. But if it could be recovered, it is probable that it would only be valued as a curiosity; since it is apparent, from a few of his Sonnets, which are preserved in the Ashmolean Museum, that he was not endued with a poetic genius.—Finally, Ovid's three first books of his Tristia were translated by THOMAS CHURCHYARD.'

‘Great attention was also paid to the prince of Latin poets, Virgil. Thomas Phayer, as mentioned in the preceding Division, had translated in the reign of Q. Mary, the seven first books of the *Æneid*. He afterwards finished the eighth and ninth books, but died soon after he had begun the tenth. This imperfect work, after a space of more than twenty years, was completed by THOMAS TWYNE. To the four last books of Virgil, Twyne added a translation of Maphæus's supplemental book. The reason of Phayer's undertaking this version, according to his own account, was to inspire the young nobility, gentry, and ladies of this country with a sense of the riches

riches of their native tongue, and to shew, that the English language was not, as too many thought, incapable of propriety and elegance.—ROBERT STANYHURST, a native of Dublin, also translated the four first books of the *Aeneid* into English hexameters. He was more unfortunate in the measure of his verification than his predecessors, and he was not equal to them in other respects.—The *Bucolics* and *Georgics* of Virgil were translated as literal as possible, by rendering verse for verse, in the regular Alexandrine without rhyme, by ABRAHAM FLEMING; he afterwards published separately the *Alexis* of Virgil, translated into English hexameters, verse for verse.—EDMUND SPENSER condescended to translate, though in a vague and paraphrastical manner, the *Culex* ascribed to Virgil.'

' THOMAS DRANT published a translation of the two books of Horace's *Satires*, which was followed by the *Epistles*, and the *Art of Poetry*. The translator was at first very paraphrastical, but afterwards endeavoured to be so literal as well nigh to render word for word, and line for line. TIMOTHY KENDALL did not obtain much glory by the specimens which he exhibited of his application to classical literature. His performance cannot strictly be called a translation of Martial, because it includes epigrams from many other writers, modern as well as ancient. Martial, however, forms the principal basis of the work.'

' MARLOE gave a version in blank verse of the first book of Lucan. His death prevented his carrying on the design, which, in the reign of James I, was completed by GEORGE CHAP-

MAN, but in a very inferior manner.—The *Thebais* of Statius was translated by THOMAS NEWTON.

‘ Besides the translation of the ancient Latin classic poets, versions were not uncommon from some of the modern poetical writers in the same language. Among others, Mantuan, who had acquired the rank of a classic, was translated by TUBERVILLE.—Another favourite author, among the English scholars in this period, was Palingenius, whose “ *Zodiac* ” was rendered into English verse by BARNABY GOOGE; and the translation had the good fortune of the original, to be very much admired.’

‘ The translations from the ancient Latin prose writers were not so numerous as from the poets. GOLDING, whom we have already mentioned with due respect, enlarged the knowledge of the treasures of antiquity, by his versions of Justin’s History, Cæsar’s Commentaries, and Seneca’s fine moral treatise on Benefits. Works of less consequence, rendered into English by Golding, were Pomponius Mela’s Geography, and the “ *Polyhistory* ” of Solinus.—Cicero’s Oration for Archias was translated by DRANT.—ABRAHAM FLEMING published a translation of certain select epistles of Cicero, and afterwards gave a large collection from the same author, to which were added letters of Pliny, and of other writers.—Tully’s offices were translated by NICHOLAS GRIMALD, a poet of the age; and so adapted was the book to general instruction, that it was several times reprinted.—One of the most important translations of this period, was that of the four first books of Tacitus, and the life of Agricola, by Sir HENRY SAVILLE,

VILLE. This translation was accompanied with notes; which were deemed of such consequence, that they were afterwards rendered into Latin by Gruther, and published at Amsterdam.'

' The books that were chiefly rendered into English from Italian and French authors, were of the fictitious and narrative kind. Among the productions of this nature, those of Boccace were the most distinguished favourites; and the versions made from different parts of his works, were very numerous. Indeed the Italian language now began to be so fashionable, that Dictionaries and Grammars of it, written in English, became common publications. The principal persons who figured as translators, were **GEORGE GASCOIGNE**, **GEORGE FENTON**, **THOMAS TUBERVILLE**, **GEORGE WHETSTONE**, **Sir JAMES HARRINGTON**, and **EDWARD FAIRFAX**.—One of the works translated by Gascoigne, is a comedy of Ariosto's called " *Suppositi*," which was acted at Gray's Inn. This translation is in prose; and it is observable, that it was the first comedy in prose which was composed in our language, and exhibited upon our stage.—The most valuable of Fenton's various performances, was his version of the twenty books of Guicciardin's History of Italy; for in this he presented to his readers not fiction but truth; and truth, too, of the first importance.—Sir James Harrington's translation of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, was a great undertaking; and though it is neither executed with spirit nor with accuracy, it contributed to enrich our poetry with new stores for the imagination, both of the romantic and comic species. A wonderful union was presented to the reader of Gothic machinery and familiar manners.—Edward Fairfax concludes the list of poetical translators

lators, with no small degree of eminence and celebrity. As he lived till the year 1632, he is commonly reckoned among the poets of James the First's time. The grand work, upon which his reputation wholly depends, the translation of Tasso's "Jerusalem-delivered," was performed by him in very early life, and was published in Queen Elizabeth's reign, to whom it was dedicated. It undoubtedly stands at the head of the poetical versions of that æra. This translation is particularly distinguished by the harmony of its verification, in which respect he ranks nearly, if not entirely, upon a level with Spenser. Waller acknowledged that he had learned his numbers from Fairfax.

‘ In general it may be observed, that the best stories of the early and original novelties of Italy, in one form or other, were given in an English dress. The versions from French authors were less frequent, and for the most part of less importance. With regard to translations from the ancients, Mr Warton has remarked, that almost all the Greek and Roman classics appeared before the year 1600. The remark we consider as too general. Were we to enter into an enumeration of them, it would be seen, that many of the finest classic writers, both in prose and verse, were left untranslated.’

‘ Imperfect as the multifarious translations of this period were, they contributed, amongst other causes, to excite a spirit of criticism, and an attention to the laws of composition. This spirit, however, had been previously displayed by one of the authors of the age, of whom little notice had been taken, till Mr Warton drew him out of obscurity. Is is THOMAS WILSON\*, who in Q. Mary's reign, (though he flourished chiefly

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\* This great improver of the English language was a native of Lincolnshire,

in Elizabeth's) published an Art of Rhetoric in English.—A technical and elementary manual, in our own tongue, written by LEONARD COX, had indeed appeared many years before; but Wilson's treatise is more liberal and discursive. It has the merit of having illustrated the arts of eloquence by example, and of having examined and ascertained the beauties of composition with the speculative skill and sagacity of a critic: so that this work may justly be considered as the first system of criticism that appeared in our language. The four parts belonging to elocution he states to be plainness, aptness, composition, and exornation, and has some excellent observations on simplicity of style. Among other lessons, this, he says, should be first learned, never to affect any strange inkhorn terms, but to speak as is commonly received; and he strongly condemns those writers who seek so far for outlandish English,

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Lincolnshire, and, in 1541, was admitted a scholar of King's College, in Cambridge. He became fellow of the College, and whilst he resided at the University, was tutor to the two celebrated youths, Henry Duke of Suffolk, and Lord Charles Brandon, his brother. In due course, he took the degree of Doctor of Laws, and was afterwards one of the ordinary masters of requests, and master of St Catherine's Hospital near the Tower. Being a man of business as well as learning, he was at times employed by Queen Elizabeth as ambassador to Mary Queen of Scots, and into the low countries. At length he rose to be a secretary of state, and a privy counsellor. In 1579 he was appointed Dean of Durham, and died in 1581. It is said, that Dr Wilson was endued with an uncommon strength of memory, and that this enabled him to act with remarkable dispatch in his negotiations. He was the author of various other works besides the two which we had occasion to mention, and was one of the most accomplished scholars of his time.

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lish, that they altogether forget their mother tongue. It appears from the work, that to write elegantly in English now began to be fashionable, and to meet with the highest applause.'

' Another composition of a similar nature with Wilson's Art of Rhetoric, though more confined in its object, was PUTTENHAM's " Art of English Poesy." Puttenham had right notions of the true character of a poet, which is, to be possessed of a creative genius. Accordingly, he commonly uses the word " Maker" for poet; and he was the first author that brought this expression into fashion, the significance of which has been much commended by Sir Philip Sidney and Ben Johnson. Imperfect as Puttenham's work is upon the whole, it was the only piece of poetical criticism of any consequence, that England produced for a long period. Indeed, nothing of importance appeared on the subject, till Dryden began to write his prefaces.'

' During Elizabeth's reign, the English language was carried by some writers to a high degree of perfection. There have not been wanting persons who have thought, that our native tongue then rose to the greatest excellence which it has ever attained; and Dr Johnson, we believe, has expressed the same opinion. In this opinion, however, we do not agree, though we are sensible of the extraordinary merit of a few individuals. Amongst these, particular praises are due to RICHARD HOOKER, a celebrated divine. He exhibited a fine model of the reasoning style in his famous " Ecclesiastical Polity," a work that reflects high credit on his powers of reasoning, and the extent of his literature. In this admirable production he set a noble example to his successors; an example which was successfully followed

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followed by a Chillingworth, a Locke, and a Hoadly.—Sir WALTER RALEIGH afforded several proofs, in this reign, of that dignity of composition which he afterwards displayed in his *History of the World*.—WILLIAM PERKINS, an eminent Divine at Cambridge, is said to have written the best language of any of that age or the next, and that many passages in his writings are equal to those of the best authors in modern times.'

‘ Some of the statesmen of Elizabeth’s reign excelled in the propriety, freedom, and strength of their style. This was the case with ROBERT DEVEREUX, Earl of Essex; ROBERT DUDLEY, Earl of Leicester; and THOMAS RATCLIFFE, Earl of Suffex. Of all the illustrious characters of this period, none, with respect to English composition, was equal to the Earl of Essex, the Queen’s unfortunate favourite. In a variety of instances he gave ample proofs of his being both a vigorous and an elegant writer. Indeed, public men may be more likely to excel in this respect than mere scholars. The latter, being confined to their closets, contract a formality and stiffness of style; and this was particularly the case, when the learned by profession did not so generally mix with the world, as is customary at present. But those who are engaged in the grand scenes of business, who have their talents called into exercise by frequent and striking emergencies, and who follow the dictates of their immediate feelings, provided they have had a tolerable education, acquire an ease and variety of expression, which the others cannot readily attain.’

‘ English Poetry assumed a peculiar importance and character in the reign of Elizabeth. This was owing to a variety

of causes and circumstances.—The age we are treating of has often been called the golden age of our poetry ; and, if this may not be true in the strictest sense, it was certainly a very poetical *âra*, and few periods can be mentioned in our history, which shine in that view with superior lustre. The principal features, that strike us in the poetry of the times, are the predominancy of fables, fiction, and fancy, and a fondness for interesting adventures and pathetic events. This characteristic distinction may be chiefly referred to the following principles, which were sometimes blended, and sometimes had a single operation. The principles we speak of were the revival and vernacular versions of the classics ; the visionary reveries or refinements of false philosophy ; a degree of superstition, sufficient for the purposes of poetry ; the adoption of the machineries of romance ; and the frequency and improvement of allegoric exhibitions in the popular spectacles.'

‘ Many circumstances contributed to give a descriptive, a picturesque, and figurative cast to the poetical language of our country ; and even the prose compositions of Elizabeth’s reign took a tincture from the same causes. In the mean while, general knowledge was widely and rapidly increasing. Books began to be multiplied, and many useful and rational topics had been discussed in our own tongue. Science, at the same time, had not made such great advances as to damp the spirit of invention (fiction). On the whole, we were now arrived at a period that was eminently propitious to original and true poetry. It was a period in which genius was rather directed than governed by judgment ; and in which taste and learning

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had so far only disciplined imagination, as to suffer its excesses to pass without censure or controul, for the sake of the beauties to which they were allied.'

' At the time when the objects pointed out by us were calculated to have a powerful operation upon the nature and character of our poetry, a genius of the first order arose, who was animated with a full portion of the spirit of the age; and capable of painting it in all its energy. This genius was SPENSER, and the production we allude to, his "*Faery Queene*."—It was not to Homer, or Virgil, or even to Tasso, that Spenser looked up for a model; but to Ariosto: and it was consequently his intention to produce a poem which should consist of allegories, enchantments, and romantic expeditions, conducted by knights, giants, magicians, and fictitious beings. If he was blameable in this respect, the fault is not so much to be imputed to himself, as to the times in which he lived. It was natural for him to follow the mode of composition which then was most admired, and to adopt those laws of taste, which Italian critics had approved: for Italy, not France, was in Elizabeth's reign the arbiter of elegance; and in Italy Ariosto was greatly preferred to Tasso. Whether this opinion was just or not, we are not here called upon to determine. It is sufficient for our purpose to observe, that it was embraced by Spenser; and that upon this principle, the plan of his grand poem, the *Fairy Queen*, was framed.—In powers of invention and richness of fancy, he has scarcely ever been exceeded. To the display of these talents, the subjects he was led to, by the fashionable reading of the times, were peculiarly

accommodated. There could not be more admirable instruments in the hands of a genuine poet, than the adventures and manners of chivalry, and the superstitions and enchantments of the dark ages. They gave scope for all the wildness and beauty of imagery, and for all the splendour and majesty of description; circumstances, of which Spenser has availed himself in the highest degree. As, therefore, his *Fairy Queen* comes recommended to us by so many excellencies, it may be thought surprising, that at present it should, comparatively, have only a small number of readers. But this may be accounted for from several causes. The customs and manners described by Spenser are vanished away, and consequently are little understood by the bulk of mankind. His allusions, likewise, are often too abstruse and learned for common apprehension; and some degree of obsoleteness hangs upon his language. Nor is allegorical poetry adapted to the general understanding. Hence it is that Spenser, with all his merit, can only be the lasting favourite of the few, who, by reading and true taste, are fully qualified to appreciate, and to feel, his transcendent beauties. By such persons, he will be admired and applauded, so long as poetry shall continue to be the object of admiration and applause.—Various other poems were written by him, besides the *Fairy Queen*, among which the “*Shepherd's Calendar*,” has excited the greatest attention. By the admirers of pastoral poetry it has always been held in high estimation, and it has no small merit of its kind. It has been the subject of imitation to succeeding writers; and the fame has been the case with regard to his “*Astrophel*,” or

Elegy

## ESSAYS, BY ADELUNG.

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**Elegy on the death of Sir Philip Sidney.** It is a pastoral elegy; and we know that pastoral elegies have been fabricated in this country, by a long train of versifiers, till they have become insignificant, and even disgusting. It need not be added, that we except the *Lycidas* of Milton.'

‘ So strongly was the age of Elizabeth devoted to poetry, that poetical publications were more numerous than those of any other species of composition in our language. One effect of this taste in the nation was, that there were two collections of “ Flowers” selected from the works of the most fashionable poets. The first was entitled, “ England’s Parnassus;” and the other, “ Belvidere, or the Garden of the Muses.” The former had the superiority, both in point of method and selection. Thus a custom was begun, which in our own time, has been carried to a blameable excess. If such compilations are not wholly destitute of utility, they have the disadvantage of contributing to the number of superficial readers, and of preventing many authors from being entirely read, the whole of whose productions might justly claim a diligent perusal.’

‘ It will not be expected, that we should endeavour to recite the names of all the writers of general poetry, that appeared during the reign of Elizabeth. Several of them, though applauded by their contemporaries, are now found to have been entitled to no more than a small degree of praise.—**GEORGE GASCOIGNE**, in addition to his merit as a translator and a dramatist, may here be mentioned as having been esteemed one of the best love-poets of his time. He attained also some reputation as a satirist.—**GABRIEL HARVEY** deserves to be remembered

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with respect, on account of a copy of verses written by him; signed Hobbinol, and which is prefixed to Spenser's *Fairy Queen*. It has even been said that this poem, if he had composed nothing else, would have rendered him immortal. GEORGE TUBERVILLE's compositions, besides his translations, were of various kinds; such as epitaphs, epigrams, songs, and sonnets; and poems describing the places and manners of the country of Russia, where he resided for a time, as secretary to Sir Thomas Randolph. He was one of those who endeavoured to refine the English style.—SIR JOHN HARRINGTON deserves little notice as a poet, independently of his translation of Ariosto. His Epigrams, however, are not destitute of wit.—If, amidst so many claims to admiration and applause, SIR WALTER RALEIGH is to be spoken of as a poet, his title to that appellation belongs to the reign of Elizabeth; for his poetical pieces were entirely the amusements of his youth, his attention being soon directed to superior pursuits.'

‘ There is some difficulty in ascertaining the exact proportion of fame due to SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, as a poet. He was a passionate admirer of the art of poetry, and his productions in this way were very numerous. It is universally allowed, that he was unfortunate in his attempts to introduce the Roman measures of verse into our language, those measures not agreeing with the genius of the English tongue.’

‘ JOSEPH HALL, who, in process of time became successively Bishop of Exeter and Norwich, is entitled to particular distinction as a satiric poet. At the beginning of his celebrated

brated “*Virgidemiarum*,” he claims the honour of having led the way in this species of composition;

“ I first adventure, follow me who list,  
“ And be the second English satyrift.”

This assertion of our poet is not strictly true; for there were various satirical writings previously to his appearance. But he was the first who distinguished himself as a legitimate satirist, upon the classic model of Juvenal and Persius, with an intermixture of some strokes in the manner of Horace. Succeeding authors have availed themselves of the pattern set them by Hall.

SIR RICHARD MAITLAND was the principal Scotch vernacular poet of this period. His productions were various, and are read with pleasure by those who are competent masters of the local and obsolete language in which they are written.—ALEXANDER ARBUTHNOT, ALEXANDER MONTGOMERY, and JOHN ROLLAND, may be passed over without farther notice; nor is it merit, but rank, that induces us to mention JAMES VI. of Scotland. He published in 1585, “The Essays of a Prentise in the divine Arte of Poesie;” and in 1591, “His Majesties poetical Exercises at vacant Houres.” King James acted the critic as well as the poet. At the end of the first of these performances are, “Rewlis and Cautelis of Scottis Poesie,” which, says Mr Pinkerton, are curious, though stupid.

We close the subject of the poetry of this period with some view of it, as displayed in the dramatic form. The first regular tragedy which England produced was early in Elizabeth's

beth's reign ; and this was the *Gorboduc* of THOMAS SACKVILLE, Lord Buckhurst. It is written in blank verse, divided into acts and scenes, and cloathed in all the formalities of the legitimate drama. The first exhibition of it was in the great hall of the Inner Temple, by the students of that Society, as part of the entertainment of a grand Christmas ; and in January, 1561-2, it was again represented before the Queen at Whitehall. It was not intended for the press, but having been surreptitiously and carelessly printed, a correct edition was given in 1571. Though this tragedy never was a favourite, even among our ancestors, and has long fallen into general oblivion, the language of it has great purity and perspicuity, and it is entirely free from that tumid phraseology which afterwards took place among our dramatic poets. Every scene of the *Gorboduc* is marked with Sackville's characteristical manner, which consists in a perspicuity of style, and a command of numbers, superior to the tone of his times.'

CHRISTOPHER MARLOE, whom we have mentioned as a translator, appeared with greater lustre as a dramatic poet. Six tragedies were written by him, and he began a seventh, which was completed by another hand. It is remarkable, and indicates the credulous ignorance of the age, that the subject of one of his pieces should be the *Tragical History of the Life and Death of Dr. John Faustus*. Marloe's chief fault in description is an indulgence of the florid style, and an accumulation of conceits, resulting, however, from a warm and brilliant fancy. It has even been said of him, that he bore some resemblance to the incomparable Shakespeare. The tra-

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gedy of *Dido*, left incomplete by Marloe, was finished by ~~by~~ THOMAS NASHE, who was likewise the author of a comedy.—GEORGE WHETSTONE was a writer upon various subjects in prose; but his poetical compositions were of too quaint and pedantic a nature, to deserve the attention of posterity. His comedy, “*Promos and Cassandra*,” no otherwise deserves to be noticed, than as it is said, that Shakespeare founded upon it his “*Measure for Measure*.” Besides other works, Whetstone drew up a life of GEORGE GASCOIGNE, who claims a place among our dramatic poets, not only as the translator of the “*Jocasta*” of Euripides, and the “*Supposes*” of Ariosto, but as the author of a trag-i-comedy, called the *Glass of Government*, and a *Masque*, entitled, “*The Princely Pleasures of Kennelworth Castle*.” This *Masque* is composed partly in prose, and partly in rhyme; and is a relation of the entertainment given to Queen Elizabeth at Kennelworth, by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in the month of July, 1575.—JOHN LILLY wrote a number of comedies, which were acted before the Queen, and seem to have been much applauded in their day. He has been highly extolled as a reformer and purifier of the English language; but the affected turn of his compositions, and especially of his “*Euphues*,” a romance, does not give credit to such an encomium.—Another comic writer of this reign was ROBERT GREEN. He was a man of great humour and drollery, and by no means deficient in point of wit; which talents, however, were prostituted by him to the base purposes of vice and obscenity. It is said of him that he was the first author who wrote for bread.—GEORGE PEELE

PEELE exercised his abilities for the stage in a different form. His "Arraignment of Paris" was a dramatic Pastoral; his "Edward the First" an historical play; and his "King David and Fair Bethsabe," a tragedy. He wrote, likewise, another tragedy, called "The Turkish Mahomet, and Hyren the fair Greek," which has not been printed. The story, no doubt, is the same as that, upon which Dr. Johnson's "Irene" is founded. Other poems were written by Peele, and it has been admitted, that he was a good pastoral poet.'

"But all the dramatic authors, we have mentioned, and the lustre they shed on the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are of little significance, when compared with the glory, which was reflected upon it by its having produced SHAKESPEARE, that master of human nature and human life; that prodigy of invention and imagination; that commander of the sublime, the pathetic, and the comic; that painter of external passions and external manners; that miracle of description, moral wisdom, and deep penetration; and that treasure of pure poetry. It was in the latter end of this period, that he wrote some of his finest pieces, and displayed the wonderful sources and energies of his mind. We pretend not to give a minute character of Shakespeare. This it would be impossible to do with justice, in many pages. Besides, he chiefly flourished in the next reign of James I, surrounded with his great competitors, but far surpassing them all."

"Among the miscellaneous writers of the age, SIR PHILIP SIDNEY deserves the first place. His "Arcadia" was long highly celebrated and greatly admired. What Sir Philip has observed

served concerning “Amadis de Gaule,” may in some degree be applied to his own performance. “Truly,” says he, “I have known men, that even with reading Amadis de Gaule, which God knows, wanteth much of a perfect poesie, have found their hearts moved to the exercise of curteſie, liberalitie, and especially courage.”—But there is another production, on account of which Sir Philip deserves to be recorded with honour as a miscellaneous writer. This is his “Defence of Poesie,” which will probably long continue to be read with pleasure, by persons of true taste and discernment. It is an ample and masterly vindication of the art, and there are many passages in it, which display great power of composition.’

“HENRY CUFF has here some claim to remembrance, in consequence of his “Treatise on the Differences of the Ages of Man’s Life.” It is a curious and philosophical performance, but the value of it is diminished by its partaking too much of that uncouthness of language, which was generally prevalent. Cuff was the unfortunate secretary to the Earl of Effex, and had in his master a superior model of English style; for the former had habituated himself to write like a scholar, while the latter managed his pen with the freedom of a man of the world.—To the names already given, may be added that of SIR GEOFFREY FENTON, secretary of state in the kingdom of Ireland. He chiefly figured in the capacity of a translator, and his principal works were “Golden Epistles,” gathered from Latin, French, and Italian authors; and a translation of “The History of the Wars of Italy, by Francis Guicciardini, in twenty Books.”—Sir Geoffrey wrote with ease, and his style reflects credit on his judgment and taste.’

The miscellaneous authors of eminent station were the following: **LORD BUCKHURST**; **EDWARD VERE**, seventeenth Earl of Oxford; **WILLIAM POULETT**, Marquis of Winchester; **ROBERT DUDLEY**, Earl of Leicester; **WILLIAM CECIL**, Lord Burleigh; **HENRY HOWARD**, Earl of Northampton; **Lord Chancellor HATTON**; and **HENRY CARY**, first Lord Falkland. — Among the female authors of this period, the illustrious **QUEEN ELIZABETH** maintains the first rank; for she was the most learned woman of the age. Besides her translations into Greek and Latin, which are foreign to this historical view, she translated Plutarch, de Curiositate, Boethius's Consolation of Philosophy, Sallust's Jugurthine War, and part of Horace's Art of Poetry, into her native language.—By her cotemporaries Elizabeth has been highly extolled for her poetry; but this must be attributed to the flattery of the age. The beautiful, the unfortunate, and the imprudent **MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS** makes but a feeble comparison with her rival Elizabeth; for she was far inferior to her in profound erudition, and rather excelled in those lighter parts of literature, that were fashionable at the Court, where she had been educated. Besides the poems written by her in Latin, French, and Scotch, she composed also a “Consolation of her long Imprisonment, and royal Advice to her Son.” Many of her Letters occur in public libraries, and are frequently finding their way to the press, in consequence of the minute attention to historical information, which is now so generally prevalent. **MARY SIDNEY**, Countess of Pembroke, and sister to Sir Philip Sidney, was a very accomplished lady, and received ample testimonies of her merit. The two works, which she published,

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were only translations; one being “A Discourse of Life and Death;” and the other, “The Tragedie of Antonie.”—But among the women of this period, who were devoted to the study of literature, the principal place is due to the four daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke. They were well acquainted with the ancient and modern languages, and translated several works into their own.—**MILDRED**, the eldest of the four sisters, was, for more than forty-two years, the wife of the illustrious statesman William Cecil, Lord Burleigh. She translated a piece of St. Chrysostom’s, from the original, into the English language.—**ANNE**, the second daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, became the wife of the Lord-keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon, and was the mother of the illustrious Francis Bacon. She translated from the Italian into English, twenty-five Sermons written by Barnardine Ochine, a celebrated divine of that age, concerning the predestination and election of God. Not long after her marriage, Lady Bacon gratified the curiosity of the public, and contributed much to the instruction of her countrymen, in religious matters, by translating from the Latin into English, an “Apology for the Church of England;” originally written by the learned and eloquent Bishop Jewel.—**ELIZABETH**, the third daughter of Sir Anthony, was first married to Sir Thomas Hobby, and secondly to John, Lord Russell, son and heir to Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford. She wrote epitaphs for her son, daughter, brother, sister, both husbands, and a venerable old friend, in the Greek, Latin, and English tongues. Besides these, Lady Russel translated, from the French into English, a tract, entitled “A way of Reconciliation

ciliation of a good and learned Man, touching the true nature and Substance of the Body and Blood of Christ."—KATHERINE, the fourth daughter in this learned family, though likewise famous for her knowledge in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, and for her skill in poetry, does not appear to have been the author of any distinct treatise.<sup>1</sup>

It must, however, be remembered, that the literature of the women of that period extended comparatively but to a few persons, and those only of considerable rank; the generality of the female sex being in a state of ignorance. There was by no means that diffusion of knowledge, that cultivation of mind, that taste for books, with which we now meet, in almost every company of ladies. Neither do we find, that the learned women of the fifteenth century produced such works as have continued to be read much by posterity. The most important production of any of Sir Anthony Cooke's daughters, was Lady Bacon's translation of Bishop Jewel's *Apology*; and yet, who but an antiquary will now seek for it, or give himself the trouble of perusing it? Not a single poetess, deserving to be mentioned, arose in this country till the seventeenth century. The DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE, Mrs KATHERINE PHILIPS, and Mrs. BEHN, appear to have been the first who could, in any degree, merit that appellation. Independently of poetry, the learned women of Elizabeth's reign have been far exceeded by the ingenious ladies of the present age, both in the general and extensive utility of their writings, and in the elegancies of composition. There is a remark to be made concerning the difference between the literature

literature of the ladies of the sixteenth century, and that of the females of more recent times. The former entered deeply into the study of the ancient languages ; whilst the latter, besides acquiring a skill in the modern tongues, especially the French and the Italian, have paid their principal attention to the cultivation of general knowledge ; though a few of them have been no small proficients in the learning of antiquity.'

' Among the numerous Divines of this period, who have a claim to peculiar and extraordinary distinction, both as men of letters and as improvers of their native language, we have already mentioned RICHARD HOOKE, to whom we shall join the name of THOMAS BILSON, successively Bishop of Worcester and Winchester. This prelate was one of the final correctors of the English translation of the Bible, in the reign of JAMES I. For this office he appears to have been particularly qualified, as his style is, in general, more easy and harmonious than was common among the ecclesiastics of his time.'

' Amidst the endless theological productions of the age, original works in Ethics were almost totally unknown among us, till at length the public received ample gratification from FRANCIS BACON's Essays, concerning which we need not say, that they opened a rich treasury of moral observation, and that they were worthy of the great and comprehensive mind, from which they proceeded. The name of Essays was then new to the world, and perhaps had been derived from Montaigne. Thus Bacon introduced into England a species of writing, which has since been largely cultivated, which has produced a vast number of beautiful compositions, and which constitutes an elegant part of modern literature.'

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The specimens of composition quoted by Dr. Johnson, in his History of the English language, extend only to the period, in which Dr. Wilson wrote; a man whose merits in refining his native tongue we have stated in page xcviij & seq. It would, however, have been very useful, if Dr. Johnson had produced further specimens, \* taken from the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, so that the subsequent transition, from the Saxon-Normannic to the modern English language, might have been exhibited in an uninterrupted view. During a period of two centuries and a half, a living language must undergo great changes. This is particularly obvious in the German, when we compare the language of the modern Germans with that of Luther and his cotemporaries. I propose, therefore, to conclude this Essay with a few general remarks.

1. The cultivation of a language altogether depends upon the progress, which a nation makes in taste, and in philosophical acquirements. The latter enrich a language, while the former contribute to give it an agreeable form, and to regulate its inflexion and harmony. Hence the history of a language cannot be properly exhibited, without giving a closely connected view of the respective improvements of the people, that make use of this language.

2. As in languages we find no arbitrary but conventional arrangement,

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\* If it were consistent with the limits allotted to this publication, many other specimens from later writers might have been inserted. But as the works of the best authors, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are pretty generally known, this omission cannot be considered as material.

arrangements in every part of them; hence the changes, which a language from time to time undergoes, must be deduced and explained from the particular circumstances, in which a nation is placed. In order to fix our attention here exclusively upon the English language, we may observe, that though the conquest of England by the Normans, points out the cause of the subsequent mixture of the Saxon-Danish dialect with the Normannic; yet as many nations have been conquered by invaders, whose languages were not introduced into the vanquished countries, this mixture cannot be satisfactorily explained, unless we have recourse to a variety of concurrent circumstances. Among these, the relative situation, in which the conquerors were placed towards the conquered, deserves particular attention. As long as the conquerors ruled the natives with despotic rigour, their language prevailed, both at court and in common life; they compelled the subjugated Britons to make use of the Normannic language, as well in their mutual intercourse as in all public transactions. Thus this language spread rapidly, even among the lower orders of the people. But as the dominion of the proud Norman Barons did not continue long enough, to suppress completely the language of the country; and as the lower classes, under Henry II, again acquired their former importance, the old popular language likewise resumed its former authority. Besides this circumstance, the nation at the same time advanced in knowledge, taste, and improvements of every kind, so that the deficiencies and imperfections of the ancient language were soon discovered. On this account, the more refined Normannic

tongue, with which the people were already acquainted, was mingled with the dialect of the natives: and as England henceforth continued to improve in knowledge and taste, by its intercourse with France, it happened, that the French language displayed its influence more and more upon that of the English; particularly as its kindred dialect, the Normannic, had already paved the way for this mixture. Hence, too, we can explain the singular phenomenon, that of two names given to the same object, the one of which is of Saxon-Danish, and the other of Normannic or French extraction, the latter should be more dignified than the former, or, at least, used more frequently among the higher classes of society. The words *ox*, *calf*, *weber*, are derived from the Danish-Saxon; but *beef*, *veal*, and *mutton*\* from the Normannic-French. Many other instances of a similar nature occur in modern English.

3. Besides the peculiarities found in every individual nation, there are, in many languages of nations intimately connected, always some particulars, in which they all agree: and as this is observable during one and the same period of time, it must be explained from the prevailing spirit of the age. In order to give an example of this kind, we shall mention the appearance of the softening letter *e*, which, since the fifteenth century, has been prevalent in several languages of Europe.

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\* The words here employed in illustration of the remark, do not appear to have been distinctly understood by Mr. Adelung; for they are not strictly synonymous, and though they both refer to the objects expressed by them, yet always in different states of their existence. W.

The adoption of this letter appears to have arisen in consequence of the progressive refinement of taste, so that speakers and writers of modern languages felt the necessity of softening the harshness of the vernacular tongues, which were overloaded with consonants. For this purpose, the insertion or the addition of the vowel *e* has been the most usual and the most general expedient; by which, among other languages, the French in particular has been much refined. The same has been adopted in the German, as the words, *Bube*, *Knabe*, a boy; *Käse*, cheese; *enge*, narrow; *blöde*, weak, timid; *Getreide*, corn, and many others, were since that period written and spoken with an additional *e*, instead of the harder words, *Bub*, *Knab*, *Käs*, *eng*, *blöd*, *Getreid*.—A similar method has been practised in the English language, as is obvious from the specimens given in the earlier periods of its History. But the limits of propriety, in this respect, were soon transgressed in all the modern languages, and this *e* was frequently annexed, without necessity, to many words, in which it served only to obscure their structure and inflexion, or at least to render them awkward and heavy. Such are, in German, the words, *die Geschwister*, the brothers and sisters; *die Bürgermeister*, the Burgo-masters; *oft*, frequently; *reine*, purely; *die Ableitungen*, the derivation; and in English, the words, *orderinge*, bothe, accordyng, *suche*, *anye*, and many others. Hence all the languages, as the people advanced in sound taste and knowledge, have, in latter times, restrained this addition within certain and proper limits.

## ESSAY SECOND.

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### *A Philosophical view of the English Language;*

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*Why called Philosophical?*

IT has now become usual in language, to call that method of treating a subject *philosophical*, where we not only describe the phenomena as they exist, but inquire also, how they came to be what they are, and why they are so. And it is merely in this sense I make use of this expression here; for the term *philosophical* strictly implies nothing more than *rational*. It would lead me too far, were I to show the superiority of this rational method in languages, over the mechanical mode of teaching, hitherto practised. It has already been introduced, with success, in all the other sciences; language alone is behind in this respect: for which reason grammar must still be contented with the contemptible appellation of a mere art, however susceptible it may be of a scientific method. All I intend here is merely an experimental inquiry, in which I propose to select a few of the more remarkable phenomena occurring in the English language; so that the reader must by no means expect to find a grammar, in the common acceptation of that term.

Of

*Of the English Language.*

What has been the origin of the English language, and by what means, by what intrinsic and extrinsic changes it has been gradually improving, for upwards of a thousand years past, has been shewn in the preceding Essay.—It is spoken in the greatest part of England, and in the Low-lands of Scotland, while, on the contrary, in the mountainous parts of Scotland, in Ireland, and in the English provinces of Wales and Cornwall, another language prevails, which is the offspring of the oldest language of the country, the British, and bears an affinity to that spoken in the French province of Britanny.

*Of the English Written Language.*

The English, like every other living language, is again divided into various dialects, which differ, partly according to the districts of the country where they are spoken, partly according to the degrees of cultivation acquired by those who speak them. The most improved of these dialects, as in every other language, is likewise the written language of the nation, and in the strictest sense termed the English language. The most accomplished part of the nation is here, as in many other states, the court, and the higher classes of the inhabitants of the Capital; for wealth and taste are generally the attendants of the court, and their natural influence on language is here accordingly most remarkable. Hence it is this refined dialect, which all writers of taste employ, and which, out of the Capital, can be learned only from books.

*Division*

*Division of Grammar.*

Grammar is divided into two principal parts, of which the first and most important relates to the art of speaking with propriety, the second to the art of writing correctly, or orthography. As one must first speak properly, before he can write with accuracy, orthography ought, in justice, to hold the last place in every grammar. Yet as no progress can be made in speaking, without acquiring the elementary part of the mode of writing, it is customary to begin with the orthography; particularly in such languages as are spoken differently from what they are written.

*Of the English Written Characters;*

There is every reason to believe, that the ancient Britons were as little acquainted with the art of writing, as any of the rude and semi-barbarous nations of those times. The Romans, indeed, as soon as they established themselves in Britain, likewise introduced their written characters; but it does not appear, that they were adopted by the natives: and though this had been the case, they would have been lost by the succeeding invasions of the Saxons, who, at their first appearance in this country, were a more rude and savage people than the ancient Britons.—As soon as the Saxons were converted to Christianity, they received the Roman characters from their Italian and Gallic teachers of religion; and these characters had been already transformed, and adapted to the running hand, then in use.

*Of*

*Of the Anglo-Saxon Alphabet.*

As the Saxons had certain sounds in their unpolished and harsh language, with which the Romans, as well as the cultivated Gauls were unacquainted, and which therefore could not be expressed by the common written characters of the latter, many of these were changed, and some new ones adopted; such as that which represents the hissing *th*, and which was borrowed from the Greek *θ*, theta. This alphabet, termed the Anglo-Saxon, maintained its ground till the invasion of the Normans, and for a considerable time after that event.

*Of its diffuse.*

However much the ancient Roman characters might have been disfigured by the corrupted taste of the middle ages, they still retained a certain affinity to their original form: but this affinity was destroyed by the peculiar Anglo-Saxon letters.—In the Saxon and Saxo-Danish periods, the national taste, notwithstanding the progress it had made, was still much too rude, to exhibit this corruption, in a sensible manner. But when the Normans subjected England to their power, and began to spread the higher degrees of improvement, that prevailed in France; when the Saxo-Danish language itself was refined by the Normannic and later French; this awkward state of things became evident, the old Anglo-Saxon characters were again abandoned, and the Roman alphabet in its pure form, such as prevailed at that time in France, was consequently adopted, in preference to the former.

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This change, however, was now attended with the inconvenience, that the simple hissing middle-sound, which had formerly been expressed by the letter *e*, borrowed from the Greek, behoved now to be denoted by the compound *th*, which could express it only in a very imperfect manner. But if the improvements in a language be carried on with taste, of two inconveniences, that one is always preferred, which is the least repugnant to the sense of beauty and propriety. The old Anglo-Saxon figure disagreed altogether with the symmetry of the Roman letters; and therefore proved more offensive to sound taste, than the *th*, although it be a compound sign for a simple sound, because it was still agreeable to the Roman fashion, at least with respect to its shape.

*Of angular Written Characters.*

To trace all the changes, which these characters have, from time to time, undergone in their figure, would be tedious, and is not properly an object of this inquiry. I shall remark only one circumstance. In the latter centuries of the middle age, when taste and industry began to revive, there arose a mode of writing, which is properly denominated the "Broken writ," but which, in common life, is generally called the "Monkish writing," because the monks, in particular, used it in their manuscripts. It is also frequently termed the "Gothic character," not as if it had been invented and used by the Goths, but in so far only, as we are accustomed to call all that taste Gothic, which delights in angular, pointed, and curled ornaments. As this handwriting was certainly more beautiful than

than the long and “waving” current hand, formerly in use, it afterwards became general over all Europe, and maintained its place till the revival of the sciences and of good taste, when people returned to the beautiful Roman letters, as they were formed, before the barbarous nations imprinted on them the marks of their corrupted and uncultivated taste.

These characters were first discontinued in Italy, where the round Roman hand was soon revived, which is therefore termed Italian; and whence it was by degrees introduced into several countries of Europe. But as the prevailing degree of taste was by no means uniform, either in all countries, or among all the classes of one and the same nation, this change happened in different ways, and with various modifications. England, since the preceding century, has been gradually adopting the round Italian letter, in all writings designed for the higher and middle classes; while, on the contrary, in such writings as are immediately addressed to the common people (for instance, in acts of parliament, public deeds, &c.) the old angular character, generally called “engrossing,” is still used; because they have been long accustomed to it, and have not yet acquired a sufficient degree of taste \*, to perceive its inelegance.

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\* The author certainly alludes here to the English lawyers *only*, as the continuation of this barbarous character is productive of considerable fees, while the disuse of it would materially affect their interest.

*Note of the Compositor.*

*The English write differently from what they speak.*

The English language consists of a mixture of the old Saxon and Danish, of the Normannic and modern French, and of the Latin. The Italian and Spanish are often added to this number, but these two languages neither have had, nor could have had, so great an influence on the English, as to form a constituent part of it, although individual words may be derived from them, which holds also with respect to many other languages. And as the languages before mentioned are so different from each other in their external and internal structure, it is easy to see, that this association or combination of words could not take place without great violence, and the destruction of a great part of the peculiarities of each of the languages thus combined in the English. Since, in all languages, a close adherence to etymology preserves their peculiar form, and has a tendency to prevent those remarkable changes, which the constant progres of civilization, as well as the precipitate alterations of the people, would otherwise produce ; it is not difficult to perceive, that, by this method of adopting and incorporating words, the proximate structure of them, with respect to the ear at least, must in a great variety of instances be destroyed ; especially as this structure, in general, is but very imperfectly known in such words, as are derived from a foreign language, that forms a component part of the ancient language of the country. The pronunciation, accordingly, in all such mixed languages, is exceedingly variable ; because the nearest derivation, of the greater number of words, is unknown to the people,

people, who speak them ; and consequently there is no fixed immovable point, to which the ideas denoted by them, might be attached, and which could guide the tongue and the ear. This deficiency is obvious in all those modern languages, which have been formed by a mixture with the Latin, as the Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese, the pronunciation of which is exposed to far more considerable changes than such languages, as have remained pure and unmixed, like the German and her northern sisters. Those mixed languages, too, would in a few centuries be deprived of their uniformity, had not the "latent perception" of necessity furnished these nations with a method of preserving, for a long time, the proximate derivation of words, at least to the eye, though the ear may have lost it.

*Explanation of this phenomenon.*

The method of preserving the etymology of words, as adopted by the nations above alluded to, is no other than this, that people write differently from what they speak : a phenomenon, which indeed has been hitherto represented, by grammarians and philosophic linguists, as the most palpable absurdity that can be conceived ; although the agreement of all the western nations of Europe, in what they have thus termed absurdity, should have convinced them, that there must be some reason for it, and which ought not to be overlooked. This reason then is no other, than to preserve, as long as is necessary, to the eye at least, the proximate derivation by means of writing, although the pronunciation has lost it ; to promote thereby that universal intelligibility, which is the

first and principal object of language ; and, at the same time, to prevent the swerving and fluctuating pronunciation, as long as possible, from further and still greater deviations.— An example or two will serve to make the matter more evident. The following words, being borrowed from the French and Latin languages, *legality*, *legion*, *organ*, *orgies*, are now pronounced *legallity*, *ledzbun*, *argun*, *ardzhix*. If they were written in this manner, an Englishman might, at length, learn to understand them tolerably well, but he would still find a difficulty, when these words occurred to him again in their original language, to recognize his own in them. The bond of connection between the English language and its constituent parts would thus be dissolved, and the reciprocal intelligibility would thereby be rendered obscure. Further, as the pronunciation in all such mixed languages, from the causes above mentioned, is from time to time considerably changed, many words would soon become altogether obscure and unintelligible, did not the etymological way of writing them, still maintain their true form, as long as is practicable and necessary. Besides, the adherence to the nearest derivation, and the preservation of the original form of words, by accurate writing, are likewise the means of preventing the extremely fluctuating pronunciation from still greater deviations. This is the true reason, why all the western Europeans, and consequently the English too, write differently from what they speak : and as this phenomenon has been produced entirely by “ the latent perception of purpose and means,” which is involved in so much obscurity, that, so far as I know, their grammarians

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have not yet been able to account for it ; hence we receive a lesson, not to censure the like regulations, if they are universally adopted by one or more nations, until the real foundation of them has been discovered. The difference of this mode of writing from that of speaking, is indeed in itself an imperfection ; but in all those languages, that are so thoroughly mixed, it is a real perfection ; because it preserves, at least to the eye, the immediate derivation, and consequently furnishes us with the easiest possible method of understanding words, while it serves to prevent any further deviations in the pronunciation.

*Of Orthography.*

On the preceding doctrine of pronunciation, is also founded the greatest and most important part of the English orthography, or rather, the orthography of the English language is the reversed doctrine of pronunciation ; because it must shew, how every uttered sound is to be written with its proper characters. The less important parts of it are, the rules for using initial capital letters, the division of syllables, the spelling of compound words, the orthographical signs, and the like.

*Of the structure of words.*

Neither orthography, nor the doctrine of tone, nor any other part of grammar, can dispense with the elements of the *structure of words*, or *etymology* in the strictest and most rigid sense ; however much this has been neglected in all the English grammars, with which I am acquainted. Hence I propose

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pose here, to make an attempt towards tracing and marking the outlines of this doctrine, which is so little understood in all languages.

*Definition of words and syllables.*

Language is composed of words. A word is the perceptible expression of an idea, which is pronounced without suspending the voice. Words then are the names of particular ideas, and are consequently as various in their structure, as the ideas themselves. In general, a word may consist of one or more syllables, and a syllable is a perceptible sound, which is pronounced with a single emission from the mouth. Since, therefore, the vowels are simple sounds, which are produced by the mere opening of the mouth, and diphthongs are double sounds, namely two vowels, in which the voice passes, without suspension, from one opening to another, it follows from this, that a word properly contains as many syllables, as there occur in it vowels or diphthongs. I have used the term "properly;" for the pronunciation, in English, occasions a variety of exceptions, by suppressing many vowels, so that for instance a word, which in writing consists of four syllables, may in pronunciation consist only of three.

*Division of words, according to their structure.*

All words, with respect to their structure, are of three kinds; they are either *radicals*, or *derivatives*, or *compounds*. Contracted words might also be added here; but they belong for the most part to the language of low life; for instance, *gaffer* for

for good father ; *gammer*, for good mother ; or if they are at all in general use, they are considered and treated as radicals.

*Definition of radicals.*

Radical words are properly such, as express the first original idea, of whatever kind, by a single emission from the mouth ; and hence they are uniformly monosyllables, because every original idea is founded on a single transient and undivided sensation. These radicals may again be divided into various species : but in grammar, this division is not attended with any practical advantage ; for every word that is a monosyllable, if it cannot be proved to be contracted from two others, is admitted there as a radical. In the following part of this treatise we shall find, that, in English, the most of the words borrowed from the French, Latin, and other foreign languages, are treated as radicals, of whatever number of syllables they may consist.

Among the radical words are likewise comprehended those, which have adopted the final letter *e*, for the sake of rendering the harsh monosyllables somewhat softer, although they acquire, by this process, an additional syllable. In all the modern European languages, particularly in the English, German, and French, this *e* has been an useful expedient, to soften the harshness of the old languages, and to introduce into them smoothness and harmony. Examples of this kind, in English, occur in the words *ake*, *alcove*, *ale*, *anise*, *ape*, to *appease*, *babe*, *baize*, to *bake*, &c. ; as likewise in the German words *Affe*, an ape ; *Bube*, *Knabe*, a boy, and many others. Upon a superficial per-

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rusal of English works, written during the last centuries, we shall find, that this expedient, from an extravagant fondness for refinement, has been carried to excess, and thus the structure of words rendered obscure. There is no doubt, that, with increasing cultivation, the English perceived this impropriety, and therefore rejected this *e*, with which, in many cases, the words had been unnecessarily loaded: in those words, however, where it was still preserved in writing, it was suppressed in the pronunciation, and thus became a mute final *e*; hence the above mentioned words are pronounced *äkk*, *äl-kahv*, *ähl*, *ännis*, *älp*, &c. But whether this alteration has been accomplished within proper limits, and whether the language has not acquired, through this medium, much unnecessary harshness, I shall not attempt to decide. I must only observe, that it is a very erroneous rule, by which, according to the English grammarians, this mute *e* makes the preceding vowel *uniformly* long, if by the term *long* we are to understand *extended*. Examples of the contrary occur in the words, *axe*, *sickle*, *badge*, *bottle*, and a great many others; beside the words consisting of three and four syllables, in which the preceding syllable is not at all accentuated, and much less should it be lengthened, as in *artifice*, *concurrence*, *perceptible*, &c.

*Of Derivatives.*

The limits of the *derived* and *compound* words cannot, in every individual case, be accurately ascertained; although they may be determined with sufficient precision, according to the ideas connected with these words. In a grammatical sense,

a *derived idea* is formed by joining an obscure collateral notion to a principal, or radical idea, and by considering both as one single idea: and a *derived word* arises from expressing this obscure collateral notion, by means of a syllable, which is no longer used as a peculiar word, consequently is as obscure as the collateral notion itself. Such a syllable is then called a *derived syllable*.

The *derived syllables* now are of two kinds; they are placed either before or after the word: in the former case they may be called *præposita*, while in the latter, we shall call them *postposita*. Both, however, must no longer be used as peculiar words; for in this case the new word is not a *derivative*, but a *compound*. The *præposita*, as well as the *postposita*, are, in English, of two different sorts: they originate either from the *Saxo-Danish*, or from the *Latin* and *French*. The words derived from the last two languages are, indeed, considered as radicals, and are not subject to any determined rules; but with the former, namely the *Saxo-Danish*, he ought to be accurately acquainted, who is desirous of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the English language, and of facilitating his study of the tone or accent of words; a doctrine, which, without this previous knowledge, would appear very perplexed.

The principal *præposita*, from the *Saxo-Danish*, are the syllables *a*, *be*, *for*, (in so far as it represents the German *ver*) *mis*, and *uz*; for instance, *away*, *aloud*, *abroad*, *above*, *anew*, *to a-bet*, *to abide*, *abode*; *before*, *to begin*, *beget*, *befall*, *befriend*; *to misgiye*, *mislead*, *misbehave*, *mistrust*, *mistake*; *unaware*, *unbelief*, *undone*.—The chief *French-Latin* syllables are the following

following ; *ac, com, con, em, en, ob, op, pre, re, se, sub* and *sur.*

The principal Saxo-Danish *postposita* are these : *ard*, coward ; *ed*, for forming passive participles ; as created, oppressed, animated ; *el*, synonymous with the German *el*, as bowel ; *er*, not only in substantives, where it corresponds with the German *er* ; adder, answier, alder, angler, finger ; but likewise in verbs, to stammer, to waver ; and in prepositions, as after ;—the syllable *en*, in adjectives, as leaden, sudden, fullen ; in verbs, to heighten, blacken, redder ;—*es*, abbels, dutches, largess ;—*ey*, agreeing with the German *ey*, as abbey, survey ;—*ing*, for forming the present participles, as well as substantives, in both of which it corresponds with the German *ing* and *ung* : feeding, breeding ;—*isb*, like the German *isch*, in apish, foolish ;—*le*, the same as the German *el*, as idle, ancle, angle, apple ;—*ly*, as the German *lieb*, particularly for forming adverbs, as absolutely, greatly, accordingly —*nes*, for the formation of abstract ideas, like the German *niss*, as goodness, frankness, abstemiousnes ;—*skip*, not unlike the German *scraft*, as lordship, friendship —*y*, corresponding with the German *ig*, in adverbs, and *ey*, in substantives, as already, abbey.—But far more numerous are the terminations formed from the Latin-French syllables, *ance, ant, ate, ble, bly, cal, cle, cy, eer, ier, en, ence, ent, ial, ian, ic, ift, ive, ion, ion, tion, ment, or, ous, ple, tive, ure, y, &c.* I cannot enter upon the signification and the practical use of all these derived syllables ; since my purpose, in this place, is merely directed to excite the attention of future teachers of the English language, with respect to them. Let nobody, however, imagine,

that

that the investigation of these particles is a mere illusion ; for their utility, throughout the whole grammar, is very great, particularly in the subsequent doctrine of the accent.

All these derived syllables, and especially the *postposita*, may again be combined with one another in different ways ; as coward, cowardly, cowardliness, or cowardice ; crafty, craftily, craftiness, or craft ; yet to investigate their peculiar structure, would exceed the limits of this Essay.

*Compound words.*

If two or more words, still current by themselves, are combined into one, there arises from this combination a *compound word*. By means of derivation we conjoin an obscure collateral notion to a radical idea ; but in compounding words, we unite two radical ideas, or rather two clear notions, into one. The design of such an union is to determine a word and its meaning, more accurately, by the medium of another ; but frequently also to express a metaphorical idea, by means of both. That, which is *determined* by another, or the *cardinal word*, in English as well as in German, is placed last : while the *determining* word, in both languages, stands foremost. Thus in the examples, cherry-tree, child-birth, powerful, to undergo, to subdue ; the latter words contain the principal idea, that is more closely determined by the words standing foremost.

The compound words are as various as there are parts of speech, which can be mutually combined. The substantive may in this manner be determined by another substantive, as

gold-fish; or by an adjective, as green-fish; or by a participle, as looking-glass; or by a pronoun, as self-conceit; or by a verb, as break-fast; or by an adverb, as fore-noon;—the adjective and participle may be joined to a substantive, as hand-full; to another adjective, as big-bodied;—the verb to a substantive, as horse-whip, bind-weed; particularly by the particles *fore*, *out*, *ab*, *ad*, *at*, *de*, *in*, *ob*, *e*, *ex*, &c.;—the adverb to another adverb, as there-fore, where-ever, &c.

It would lead me too far from my object, if I attempted to define the nature of true compounds; for this can be accomplished only by means of a minute and accurate investigation of them, from which the general rules for the compounding of words must result, and at the same time the various modifications, to which the *determining* word is liable, might be discovered and established.

*Of the tone or accent of words.*

The rules for the tone or accentuation of words, in English, are perhaps more variable and intricate than in any other language. This want of uniformity is owing, partly to the whole genius and disposition of the language, partly to the careless method and confused notions of grammarians.—I. On account of the genius and disposition of the language. The English tongue is a mixture of the Saxon, Danish, French, and Latin; it has therefore lost a great share of its peculiarity, while each of these foreign languages, being thoroughly mixed with it, have likewise communicated to it a considerable part of their analogical affinities. Among other parts of grammar, this deviation is obvious in the accentuation of words, which

which is regulated by different analogies; hence no general and determinified rules can be laid down for it. In the German language, the tone is the most regular and settled part of grammar; hence it can be reduced to a few plain rules.—2. On account of the confusion prevailing among grammarians, who, in English, as well as in German, have always confounded the *prosodic* measure of the accent with that of the *metrical*, and therefore constantly speak of *long* and *short* syllables; notions, which do not at all apply to this doctrine, and which occasion great embarrassment.

I am induced to censure, upon this head, not only the grammarians and schoolmasters of the common sort, but even such teachers and writers as claim a superior rank, for instance a JOHNSON, SHERIDAN, and several others. The latter has published “A General Dictionary of the English language, in two Volumes, Quarto, London, 1780,” in which he confines himself entirely to the accent, and the pronunciation of words; but, with respect to the former, he proceeds in the same intricate, fluctuating, and undetermined manner, as his other brethren of Priscian’s family. It is therefore my aim in this Essay, to propose a method, by which rational teachers may, in a great measure, explain this obscure doctrine concerning the accentuation of words, and thus arrive at some certainty, at least with respect to a considerable number of English words. Previously to this inquiry, however, it will be requisite to premise some general ideas, and to dismiss altogether, the former notions of *long* and *short* syllables.

*General*

*General Definitions of the accent.*

The accent consists in a particular elevation of the voice, with which, in polyyllables, the one syllable is as it were raised above the others: thus in *émergence*, *emploiement*, the syllables *mer* and *ploy* are called *accentuated syllables*. The reason of this mode of distinguishing one syllable from another, is properly contained in the nature of the word and the intention of the speaker, who, by this elevation of the voice, points out that syllable, which expresses the principal idea, and to which he chiefly directs the attention of the hearer. Hence the two accentuated syllables, above mentioned, contain the principal ideas of the words, in which they occur, and all the other syllables denote only collateral ideas, or further determinations, inflexions, and the like. I have said, that this, in the nature of the thing, is "properly" the intention of the accent; for this reason in the German, and probably, too, in all other unmixed languages, we meet with the general rule, that the radical syllable, in such words as consist of a plurality of syllables, always receives the accent; since it contains the principal idea of the word. In the German language, this rule is so general, that the few exceptions from it scarcely deserve any attention. But as the English is a very mixed language, this rule is liable here to a much greater number of exceptions; especially with respect to the words borrowed from the Latin and French, in which the radical syllable has become obscure, so that it cannot in all instances preserve its due accent. Since I propose to resume that subject in another part of this Essay, I shall here only remark,

remark, that those words from the Anglo-Saxon, which are still current in the English language, follow this rule, and perhaps as uniformly as in the German.

*Distinction of the accent as to its force.*

The tone or accent must be distinguished, both as to its force and duration. With respect to the former, it may be divided into the *principal* and *concurrent* force of the accent. There are certain polysyllables, in which two of the syllables are marked by the accent, when one of them, that requires the strongest elevation of the voice, receives the *principal* force; while the other, in which the elevation of the voice is weaker, is uttered with a *concurrent* force. Thus, in the word *hórfse-courser*, the syllable *hórf*, as well as the syllable *cour*, are both marked by the accent; yet with this difference, that the former is more strongly pronounced, and the *principal* force is laid upon it; while in the latter, the elevation of the voice is weaker, and consequently it is denoted only by a *concurrent* force. There is, however, a general rule, which deserves to be remarked in this place, and according to which no word can have more than one principal accent. But the cases, in which words, beside the principal one, may have a concurrent accent, are the two following: 1, in compound words, where every word retains its accent, yet so that, in one of the words, this accent becomes the principal or predominant sound, as will clearly appear from the sequel; 2, in derivatives consisting of polysyllables, which require the principal accent to be laid upon the fourth or fifth syllable from the end; in which case, unless a syllable be suppressed, one of the derived sylla-

bles receives a secondary or concurrent accent; because three or four syllables in succession, without any distinction of tone, would offend the ear. In the word *de générateneſſ*, the accent rests upon the syllable *ge*; and though the *e* in the syllable *te* be suppressed, there would still follow three syllables in succession, without any elevation of the voice, if the syllable *ra* were not pronounced with a secondary accent; by which means this monotony is avoided. The same occurs in the words, *fâtherlineſſ*, *délicateneſſ*, *absolutely*, &c.

*Of the duration of the accent.*

Whether the accent be principal or secondary, it is with respect to its duration, either *extended* (long) or *acute*, (short). It is *extended*, when the voice dwells longer upon the vowel, as in the words, *fâme*, *fâte*, *fâther*; *acute*, when it quickly passes over the vowel and rests upon the consonant, which then acquires a double sound, as in *fân*, *whén*, *môther*, *pén*. These distinctions between the *extended* and *acute* accent, the grammarians of the English as well as the German and other languages, have endeavoured to express by the terms *long* and *short*; but as they were under the necessity of calling those syllables, which are pronounced with no accent whatever, upon the same plan, either long or short, they involved themselves in perpetual labyrinths, from which there was no escape. The fact is, that in prosody every accentuated syllable is likewise long, whether the accent be extended or acute; for here the unaccentuated or neutral syllables alone are short.—In the Dictionary of the English language, which I have published in two volumes, 8vo. Leipzig, 1783 and 1796, I have pointed

out

out the extended or long accent thus (à) and the acute or short accent with this (á) mark: yet as I was misled at the commencement of the work, by implicitly following Johnson as my guide in the accent, I began that distinction only about the middle of the letter A.

*Difference between extended and acute syllables.*

From what has been said in the preceding section, it is evident, that in the extended accent the voice dwells longer upon the vowel; thus the succeeding consonant can have only a mild and simple sound: as on the contrary, in the acute accent the voice quickly glides over the vowel and rests upon the consonant, which consequently is pronounced with more energy, or like a double consonant. Hence, in German, we find the excellent rule prevailing, by which only a simple consonant is used after a long or extended vowel, but a double consonant after a short or acute vowel; excepting those cases, where two different consonants accompany the preceding vowel; for instance, *icb kám*, I came; *Der Kámm*, the comb; *die Múst*, the Muse; *zu müßén*, to be obliged. This rule indeed is liable to some exceptions, but it forms nevertheless one of the most admirable peculiarities of that language; a peculiarity, of which the modern innovators wish to despoil it; as these men are more fond of destroying than of erecting. But in the English language, where the pronunciation is perpetually at war with the orthography, that excellent rule cannot be put in practice, as the exceptions from it are more numerous than the cases to which it applies. Thus the words, *mán*, *múd móug*, *móther*, *mínion*, &c. have the short or acute accent,

cent, though only a single consonant follows the vowel ; while the words, *àll*, *àlms*, *mòst*, *càll*, *fall*, *false*, *fàrm*, &c. take the long or extended accent, notwithstanding that the vowel is accompanied by two consonants. Even the orthographical diphthongs are not uniformly pronounced as such; for they are very frequently uttered short or acute, as is obvious in the words, *déad*, *héad*, *léarn*, *léad*, *méadow*, &c. Nay, it often happens, that even double sounds, according to orthography at least, may occur in syllables, which receive no accent ; for instance in the words, *cháplain*, *pídgeon*, *fórfait*. In these circumstances, it must be extremely difficult to lay down fixed rules, in what cases and situations the accent is acute, and where it must be extended.

*Of the accent of radicals.*

All radicals are originally monosyllables, except in the cases already pointed out, where the harsh sound of the monosyllable has been softened by the additional vowel *e*. As every radical word is the sign of an idea, it likewise has its peculiar determined accent, but which is perceptible only in combination with other words ; for the accent itself is nothing else than than a relative idea. There are however words, which in the connexion of a sentence receive no accent, but throw it upon the succeeding word ; and these are commonly such words as denote circumstances or unimportant modifications ; for instance, the article, several of the pronouns, and the particles. In "*the finger, my bouse, on the east*," the determining words, *the*, *my*, *on the*, throw their accent upon the substantives that accompany them. All these cases ought to be determined with precision.

precision in an English grammar ; it is sufficient here, to have hinted at them.—All the radical words, however, which signify principal ideas, such as substantives, verbs, adjectives, &c. must necessarily be accentuated. It is evident from these remarks, that the accent, in monosyllables, as well as in polysyllables, wholly depends on the importance of the idea.

*Of the accent of derivatives.*

With respect to the accent, the derivatives must be divided into two great classes ; namely into such as are derived from the Saxo-Danish, and into those which have been adopted from the French and Latin : both must, in this respect, be subject to different rules.

The words derived from the Saxo-Danish, follow that very easy and precise rule, according to which, in polysyllables, the principal accent is uniformly placed upon the original or radical syllable ; a rule, which in German is liable to fewer exceptions than any other, and which I believe to be as general in English, since it is so deeply founded on the nature of the thing, and the purpose of language : for my part, I am acquainted with no words, that can be considered as exceptions. A few instances will serve to illustrate this assertion. The following are derivatives with additional preceding syllables ; *afär, awày, behìnd, begét, begín, besides* ;—with succeeding syllables are, *ácorn* (from the Low Saxon *Ecker*, in which instance the syllable *orn* corresponds with the German final syllable *er*), *bàreness, béggarliness, tåmeness, fàther, móther, singer, bósom, boìsterous, súdden* ;—with both preceding and succeed-

ing syllables are, *ashamed*, *bebolden*, *behaviour*, *beginning*, *be-  
comingly*.—Those, who pay proper attention to this easy rule, will find, that one half of the difficulties, in placing the accent on English words, is thereby removed.

The words derived from the French and Latin, in some instances, likewise follow this rule ; *to abâte*, *to abândon*, *abridge*, *abominable*, *abstêmious* &c. ; but as the exceptions from it are more numerous than the cases to which it applies, it cannot be considered as a general rule ; for in the examples, *ávenue*, *bar-  
bârity*, *bombârdment*, *cômmiffary*, *côntinent*, *contînuity*, *inocu-  
lation*, &c. the accent is throughout placed upon derived syllables. In addition to this difficulty of distinguishing the accent, we may observe, that the English words very frequently displace the accent from the syllable, which possessed it in Latin or French. This is the case in the words, *Euârope*, *âb-  
fence*, *âblative*, *âbrogate*, *âbsolute*, *âcademy*, *âccent*, *âdage*, *âd-  
vocate*, *âffignéè*, *balloôn*, and a great many others. But even here some general rules may be formed, which would hold good, at least with respect to some particular cases. Thus in derived words, that terminate with the syllables *son*, *tion*, *cious* and *tious*, the accent rests upon the next-preceding syllable : this and similar rules we find already stated in the common grammars.—The causes, from which the placing of the accent in English words is so precarious, are chiefly the following : 1. because these words had in their original languages, namely in Latin and French, already deviated from the natural rule above mentioned ; the Latin words, *imputâre*, *imprudêntia*, *adequâtus*, and the French words *imputèr*, *mariné*, *marchèr*,

*marchèr, opinion*, have not preserved their accents upon the radical syllables ;—2. because in the English language these words were frequently contracted, so that a change in the placing of the accent became necessary ; v. g. *to opīne*, from the Latin *opinari*, or the French *opinèr* ; although this accidental change was frequently attended with the advantage of replacing the accent upon the radical syllable of the word ; in this condition we find the verbs, *to desire*, from the French *desirer* ; *to despair*, from the Latin *despèrare* ; *to detest*, from *detestari*.

*Of the accent of compound words.*

Although every word, when compounded with another, preserves its peculiar accent (*bóok-binder, báck-bíte*) yet as there can be only *one* principal accent pronounced in each word, this accent is usually, “ and according to rule,” placed upon the determining word, namely that which stands foremost ; for instance, *álder-man, áxle-tree, báck-bite, báck-ward, báne-ful, báre-foot, blóod-béd, coál-pit*. I have said, “ according to rule ;” for there are indeed many exceptions here, not only with respect to various particles, as in the words *al-míghty, an-óther, arch-déacon, with-bóld, with-óut, where-by, un-like, under-táke, &c.* but likewise in the triple compound words, *al-to-géther, aþ-wéndes-day, what-so-éver, here-to-fóre*, for which instances, however, many fixed rules might be discovered.

*Reflections upon words as parts of speech.*

The rules concerning the letters and their pronunciation, the structure of words, and the accent founded upon that structure,

structure, compose the first and *etymological* part of grammar ; after which follows the second division, treating of words as parts of speech, and their inflection. Words are called *parts of speech*, in so far as they denote different modifications of ideas in the connexion of a sentence : and in order to understand a language thoroughly, we must previously acquire clear notions of this subject.—Speech is the audible enunciation of our ideas, and these are (generally) produced by objects without us. In so far as these objects affect the representations of the mind, they are of two kinds only ; namely, either self-subsistent things, i. e. *substances* ; or those circumstances and modifications which occur in substances, i. e. *the accidental*. If our speech were conformable to the nature of things, we should have no more than these two parts of speech ; but as we cannot comprehend a substance with all its relations, at one view, nor conceive these in an uniform manner, various parts of speech must necessarily result, particularly with respect to the *accidental*. Besides, the degree of perspicuity in our conceptions renders a new distinction necessary ; since the representations of the mind are either so obscure, that they remain mere sensations, or assume the form of clear notions. As, therefore, with respect to the parts of speech, every thing depends upon the method, in which they are exhibited to the mind ; and as this method is by no means uniform in all nations, consequently the number and disposition of the parts of speech do not correspond with each other in all languages. The English, for example, have arranged their ideas and representations in the manner as follows.

I. Abstruse representations, or mere *sensations*, in an abstract sense. The expression of these affords the *interjections*, or words of sensation, which denote mere abstract sensations.—From the higher branches of etymology we learn, that the interjections are the foundation of all language; because our representations must be first abstruse, and consequently mere sensations, before they can be developed into clear notions.

II. Distinct representations or ideas, the expression of which furnishes us with *words*, in the most concrete and peculiar sense.—The things, of which we have ideas, are of a twofold nature; namely,

1. *Self-subsistent things* or *substances*, and every thing that is exhibited to the mind as independent. The sign or expression of them is the *substantive*.

2. *Accidental things*, among which we comprise all that can be distinguished in the self-subsistent thing, and that relates to it. In general, this is again of a twofold nature; for it is either belonging to the thing itself, as *red*, *great*, *beautiful*; or it is external to it, as *now*, *here*, *away*: in the former case, it is called a *quality*; in the latter, a *circumstance*. But according to the manner of exhibiting it, this accidental thing is again divided into different classes, which afford an equal number of parts of speech. It is considered,

A. Independently, external to the self-subsistent thing, and in immediate connection with it; and then it is in the aforesaid manner of two kinds; namely,

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1. a *quality*; hence arises the qualifying word, or the adverb of quality, which can be predicated of the substantive, only by means of a verb;

2. a *circumstance*, which in grammar, is of three different kinds; viz.

a, an independent circumstance, the *adverbium circumstantiae*, or a word expressive of a circumstance, in the most concrete sense;

b, the relation subsisting between two self-subsistent things, the *preposition*; and

c, the relation between sentences and their members, the *conjunction*.

B. As comprised in the attribute, i. e. something accidental respecting the circumstance of time, number, &c, predicated of the self-subsistent thing, viz. the *verb*.

C. As already attributed, or in immediate connexion with the substantive. This is either

1. a predicated quality, i. e. a property, the name of which is expressed by the *adjective*; or

2. a circumstance; and then again

a, of self-subsistence, the *article*;

b, of the accidental relation to the person, the *pronoun*; and lastly

c, of computation, the *number*.



*Farther reflections upon words.*

From the premises laid down, the following parts of speech are the necessary result:

1. The *substantive*, or the sign of all things, which do not only  
subsist

subsist of themselves; but which are likewise conceived as such. It is either a proper name, *nomen proprium*; or the name of a certain class of things, *nomen appellativum*. As the latter appertains to several things of the same species (for instance, *man, borfe, house,*) and thus again suffers a great diminution of its self-subsistence, certain words became necessary, in order to restore this self-subsistence, in such situations as required it. This was accomplished

- 2, by means of the *articles*;
- 3, by *numbers*, that express the circumstance of computation; and
- 4, by the *pronouns*; which serve to denote the immediate relation of the person, in connexion with the substantive.

5, The accidental thing, as connected with the substance itself, is considered, in the German language, in two different ways, namely of itself (*per se*); in which case it can be predicated of the substantive, by means of a verb only, v. g. *this house is large*; or in immediate connexion with the substantive, as *the large house; a great house*. In the former case it is called *adverbiūm qualitatis* or a *qualifying word*; but in the latter; it is simply an *adjectivum* or a *word of property*: this is derived from the former, by means of a peculiar method of inflecting it, by grammarians called *concretion*. In English, however, this distinction does not prevail; for the adjectives here are nowise different from the adverbs of quality; hence a peculiar term of art would be requisite to denote, with precision, the idea combined in both cases: *God is almighty*, and *the almighty God*.—To this head also belong the *participles*, which are

not considered as particular parts of speech, but are either adjectives or adverbs of quality derived from the verb; so that they express, in the same word, the collateral idea of time.

6. The *verb*, a part of speech, predicating of the substantive that which is accidental, together with different collateral ideas, combined in one and the same word.

7. The *prepositions*; 8, *conjunctions*; and 9, *interjections*, having been considered in the preceding section, require no further explanation.

#### *Analysis of the inflections.*

That which is accidental may be expressed in a great variety of ways, as belonging to the self-subsistent thing; whence a number of casual relations arise, which would render our speech extremely prolix, if we had not contrived means of immediately denoting them in the compass of every word itself, through simple radical sounds; i. e. by inflecting the word. The Germans have adopted the following modes of inflection.

1. The distinction of plurality in substantives, or the *formation of the plural*. 2. The distinction of the relation subsisting between the substantive contained in the predicate, and the subject; the *declension*. 3. The distinction of the gender in the words determining the substantive; the *motion*. 4. The change of an adverb of quality into an adjective; the *concretion*. 5. The distinction between a higher and the highest degree expressed in an adverb of quality, or adjective; the *degrees of comparison*. And finally, 6, the distinction of the different relations, which verbs denote, or the *conjugation*.—The English language is, with respect to the inflection of words, very simple

simple, or rather defective ; for, of the six modes of inflection above specified, three only are known in English ; namely, the formation of the plural, the degrees of comparison, and the conjugation. As the adjective here is in no manner different from the adverb of quality, and as the substantives likewise have no peculiar declension, there can be exhibited neither *concretion* nor *motion* in their form.

### I. *Further reflections on the substantive.*

#### 1. *Division of it.*

Every part of speech must be separately considered in grammar ; it must be divided into its different species, and the inflections, to which it is liable, must there be exhibited. The substantive justly occupies the first place, as it is the most important word in speech ; in the next place, the words which determine the substantive, namely the articles, adjectives, pronouns, and numbers ought to follow ; after these the verbs, and finally the adverbs and interjections conclude the whole. As it is not my intention to write a grammar in this Essay, I shall content myself with making a few remarks upon each part of speech.

The substantive is the sign of a self-subsistent thing, or a substance. This is either really and independently subsisting ; or it is not substantially existing, and only represented as self-subsistent : the former is called a *concretum*, the latter an *abstractum*. The *concrete* thing is again divided into four classes ; for it represents either the name of an individual, the proper name, *nomen proprium* ; or that of a whole class of similar in-

dividual things, *nomen appellativum*; or that of a multitude of things, in which no individuality is distinguished; a collective name, *nomen collectivum*; or lastly, that of matter, *nomen materiale*, such as iron, wood, stone, bread.

2. *The gender of substantives.*

Many languages divide all their substantives into certain classes, borrowed from the physical gender of the animal kingdom, so that all their words of determination, i. e. the articles, pronouns, adjectives, and sometimes also the numbers, must mark the gender peculiar to every substantive. The question now arises, whether this be likewise the case in English. If we follow the common statement of grammarians, we must answer in the affirmative: but if we reflect upon the nature of the thing, we cannot allow the English substantives any such gender as these words possess in the German, Latin, and many other languages. The strongest proof of this is the absence of all the genders in the determining words above mentioned. The personal pronoun of the third person, indeed, appears to prove the contrary; for *he*, *she*, and *it*, are really inflected according to the three different genders. But there is a great difference between marking the physical gender, where this distinction becomes necessary; and between classing all substantives according to the different genders, although they might refer to inanimate things, and to abstract ideas. All languages practise the former expedient, though they do not make use of the latter classification; and this is also the case in the English language. The English substantives, as substantives,

substantives, mark no particular gender ; for if they did so, their determining words likewise ought to point it out ; which however is not consistent with practice. Hence this apparent deficiency greatly facilitates the acquisition of a language, which does not impose upon us the task of studying the genders of nouns ; since it is obvious, that this distinction, in our present method of representing objects to the mind, is not attended with the least advantage, that could in any degree compensate this inconvenience,

3. *Of the formation of the Plural.*

Since the words expressive of kind, or *appellatives*, may either relate to one thing of the kind, or to a plurality of things, the *numbers* serve the purpose of marking this double distinction. The formation of the plural, which in the German, Latin, and other languages is very difficult, is remarkably easy in the English ; as it is formed by adding the letter *s* or the syllable *es* to the singular ; and the few exceptions, or deviations from this rule, we find stated in every grammar.

4. *Of the Declension.*

To *decline* a noun, is to denote certain relations of a self-subsistent thing, by means of simple radical sounds, which are annexed to the word itself : for instance, *Haus*, a house ; *Häusel*, of a house ; *Hause*, to a house ; *Häuser*, houses ; *Häusern*, to the houses, &c. The English language does not admit of these inflections, and by rejecting them, saves much trouble and inconvenience, which attend the many declensions, and

and the exceptions from them prevailing in other languages. In English, therefore, some prepositions are used, which express the inflected cases of other languages: and as two cases only are marked by the prepositions, namely the genitive or ablative of the Latin by the particle *of*, and the dative by *to*, both of them are employed like all other prepositions, without distinction of numbers, or any other circumstance. Yet there is still a vestige of a true declension remaining in English, which consists of what is called the *genitivus possessivus* (more properly *postpositivus*), which is pointed out by the letter *s*, and made use of, when the genitive stands before its substantive without an article; v. g. *the king's speech, the queen's brother*; instead of "the speech of the king, the brother of the queen." It is not difficult to discover, that this 's is a vestige of the German genitive, *des Königes Rede*. And as the English substantives have no variety of gender, this 's consequently remains unaltered, of whatever gender the word may be in other languages.

## II. *Of the Article.*

The article is a part of speech, which serves to distinguish different kinds of absoluteness in substantives, and is chiefly used with *appellatives*. These mark whole kinds of things of the same nature; such as *horse, house, tree*; which, from their very extensive application, lose a great share of their absolute identity: or, in other words, as they are common to many owners and places, the hearer could never know, which individual horse, house, or tree is meant, if this circumstance

were

were not determined by the article. *I have seen horse*, has a very obscure meaning, whence the hearer is necessarily induced to ask, whose or what sort of a horse I have seen.—The pronouns and numbers, indeed, likewise serve to determine the objects, but there is yet another determination requisite, to which they are not adapted, namely that of *absoluteness*, which is expressed by the articles.

In the English grammars, *three* articles are generally enumerated; the *indefinite*, which is said to consist in the preposition *of* in the *genitive*, and *to* in the *dative case*; the *definite* expressed by the word *the*; and the article of *unity*, *a* or *an*. But this may be called true pedantry of the schools, by which we are led from one absurdity to another. For 1, who will allow himself to consider the words *of* and *to* as articles, since they are real prepositions, which govern their respective cases. 2. If these particles *of* and *to* represent the definite article, we must likewise grant, that in the expressions “*of the king*” and “*to the king*,” two different articles are used before the substantive, viz. one that is indefinite or undetermined, and another that is definite or determined, so that one of them necessarily supersedes the other: this, however, is a palpable contradiction. 3. The proposed article of *unity* is incorrectly expressed in its denomination, because it is liable to be confounded with the number *one*, and has actually been confounded with it, by several English grammarians.—The definitions and explanations of the articles, which appear in the usual French grammars, are equally erroneous. The English language admits only of *two* articles; the *definite*

—*the*

*the*, and the indefinite—*an* before a vowel or mute *b*, and *a* before a consonant. The latter, no doubt, has likewise a tendency to determine the self-subsistent thing ; but as it does this in a much weaker degree than the former, it has received the name of the indefinite or undetermined article. I. The definite article points out an individual of a kind or class, that is already known and self-subsistent : *the emperor*, signifies, according to the connection of the sentence, either the present reigning emperor; or that emperor, of whom we were speaking last ; consequently this article denotes one individually determined person, which is singled out from that class of individuals, who are or have been emperors. II. The indefinite article *an* or *a* serves to mark ; 1, an indefinite self-subsistent thing belonging to a whole class, without pointing out a particular individual ; v. g. “ *an enemy* is not to be trusted,” i. e. “ *no enemy* whoever he be ;” 2, the species or class, to which a thing belongs, as an undetermined self-subsisting thing, v. g. “ *he was killed by a sword*,” i. e. “ *by one of the weapons called swords*.”

Without any article may be used ; 1, proper nouns ; because they are already more accurately determined by means of the individual, to which they refer, than they could be through the articles ; v. g. *Cicero was an excellent orator* ; —*all Europe is in confusion* : excepting, however, when these nouns again partake of the nature of appellatives, i. e. when they may be referred to more than one thing ; for instance, *the elder Pliny*, *the little James*. In like manner are the names of rivets and ships considered as appellatives, and connected

ected with the definite article ;—2, if a determined single individual is meant, and the whole kind or class is understood by it, in which case the Germans make use of the definite article ; v. g. *der Mensch ist vernünftig*, “ man is rational ; ” but in such expressions, the English make use of no article :—3, if an indefinite number of single things, out of a whole class, is to be expressed ; or in such cases as require the indefinite article in the singular number ;—“ I want pens,” in the singular, “ I want a pen ;”—and 4, if merely the class, kind, or matter is to be denoted ; as “ building is precious ; or, “ it is fine cloth.” In all these instances, the oblique cases of the nouns are only marked by the prepositions *of* and *to* in the genitive and dative, and by the sense of the active verb itself in the accusative, without admitting any article.

### III. *Of the Adjective.*

In the German language, that which is found to be changeable in the thing itself, is considered in two different ways, namely, 1, as independent of the substantive or, at least, not in immediate connection with it, in which case it is enunciated by the verb ; v. g. *der Mann ist gut*, “ the man is good ; ” or 2, in immediate connection with the substantive, v. g. *der ist ein guter Mann*, “ that is a good man,” where the German adjective is regularly inflected, according to the gender of the noun : while in the former case, it is used adverbially, and remains indeclinable. Hence arise two parts of speech, namely the adverb of quality, and the adjective, or the word expressive of the property of the thing, which is derived from

the former, by means of the concrete syllables *e* for the feminine, *er* for the masculine, and *es* for the neuter gender, or with the simple vowel *e* for all the three genders, when the definite article is connected with the noun. And as the German substantives not only mark different genders, but also the oblique cases, it may be easily inferred, that the adjectives are liable to similar inflections; a circumstance, which is attended with considerable difficulties to foreigners, who apply themselves to the speaking and writing of that language. In English, a much easier and shorter method is practised, since the adverb of quality is, in no respect, different from the adjective, and may be combined with the substantive, without any inflection: thus it remains uniformly in the same termination, whether we say, "the prince is powerful," or "the powerful prince." Hence, too, the adjectives distinguish no plural; and as the English substantives mark no gender, and are of themselves indeclinable, the adjectives likewise cannot be inflected, and are in this respect throughout managed like adverbs.

The only inflections, of which adjectives are capable, are the degrees of comparison, which are formed nearly upon the plan of the German, by adding to the positive degree the syllable *er*, in order to make the comparative; and the syllable *est*, to form the superlative: but very frequently these two degrees are expressed by prefixing to the simple adjectives the respective adverbs *more* and *most*.

#### IV. *Of numerical words.*

The words denoting numbers are rarely introduced into English

English grammars; as particular parts of speech; and frequently they are not at all mentioned: we must nevertheless attend to several peculiarities in the use of them. As, with respect to the idea combined with them; they are remarkably different from all other parts of speech; they certainly deserve to be separately treated.—Numbers denote nothing that is discoverable in the things themselves, as is the case with the preceding part of speech; but they establish a circumstance, namely that of numerical computation: Beside this peculiarity, they are also distinguished from the usual words denoting circumstances, by their immediate connexion with the substantive, while the former can be predicated of substantives, by means of verbs only. Grammarians ought to distinguish the different species of numerical words, since they signify either absolute number without any collateral idea, viz. the *radical* or *cardinal* numbers, which may again be divided into *definite* and *indefinite*; or they are connected with the collateral ideas of order or succession; classification; proportion, &c. All these words are liable to many peculiar applications, which, however, properly belong to the province of grammar.

#### V. *Of the Pronouns.*

Pronouns are words determining the substantives, and denoting those changeable relations, which are indicated in the very act of speaking, and the principal of which concerns the relative condition of the person. They are as various as the relations pointed out by them; namely, *i*; *personal*, which refer to persons only. These may be far-

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ther 1,) *definite*; which are again divided according to the three persons, and according as each of them is in the singular or plural number. The first and second persons are sufficiently determined by the relation, in which they appear in speech; hence there is no farther necessity for pointing out their gender. But the third person is, of itself, wholly undetermined; and for this reason its gender is marked in the singular number, by different words for each of the three genders. Yet as the English substantives, in general, express no peculiar gender, the third personal pronoun serves only to denote the physical gender of the person; for this reason all such things, as cannot be distinguished by being physically of the masculine or feminine gender, receive the impersonal pronoun *it*; 2,) *indefinite*, among which this undetermined syllable *it* occupies the first rank; a syllable, which indicates a determined subject in so undecided a manner, that it does not positively follow, whether a person or a thing is understood by it: v. g. “*it* is said; *it* was Mr Pope; *it* is I.” —In like manner is used the improper pronoun *one*, in as far as it corresponds with the German pronoun *man* or *jemand*, “somebody;” v. g. to love *one*.

2. *Reciprocal* pronouns, which properly belong to the former class, and are only used, when the predicate is again referred to the subject: “I love myself,” &c.

3. *Possessive* pronouns serve to determine the relation of possession, with respect to the person. They are either *conjunctive*, when immediately combined with their substantives, “my house, your father;” or *absolute*, when they are

are predicated of substantives by means of a verb, as likewise in answering a question: v. g. "this house is mine; —whose father called? —yours." The possessive pronoun of the third person is, like the personal pronoun, again distinguished according to its physical gender, so that *his* and *her* are used of things, which by the laws of nature are of the masculine or feminine gender; and in all other cases the possessive pronoun *its*.

4. *Demonstrative* pronouns, which denote the relation of the place with respect to the speaker, so that the nearest place is expressed by the words, *this* in the singular or *these* in the plural, and the most remote, by the respective words *that* or *those*.
5. *Determinative* pronouns, which ascertain the subject, to which a sentence is referred by means of the subsequent reciprocal pronoun. To this number belong, partly the personal pronouns *he* and *she*; when they are used in a determinate sense, v. g. "he that, or who, fights with silver arms;" partly the pronoun *such*, in which case it is accompanied by the particle *as*: "such as are loyal, &c."; partly also the "pronoun of identity," *the same*, with its further determinations, *the very same*, *the self same*, and *the very*.
6. *Relative* pronouns, which bring back the sentence to a subject, either previously pointed out, or connected with a determinative pronoun; of which class are, *who*, *which*, *what*, and *that*.
7. *Interrogative* pronouns serve to introduce a question, for which

which purpose we make use of the relative pronouns, *who*, *which*, and *what*.

The pronouns, in general, and the personal pronouns, in particular, are very irregular in their inflection. This peculiarity is remarkable, not only in the English, but likewise in all the languages hitherto discovered: for the pronouns may be classed among the most ancient words in speech; their origin must be traced in the primitive ages, when the language of every nation was yet in its infant state.

A number of other pronouns are commonly enumerated in grammars under the name of *pronomina indefinita*; but as they express none of the relations denoted by pronouns, they cannot be reduced to any of the classes before specified. Besides, many of them are so pointedly determined, that no rational being will consider them as indefinite; for instance, *all*, *whole*, *each*, *neither*, *every*, &c. By far the greater part of them rather belong to the class of general numbers, viz. *all*, *any*, *some*, *both*, *each*, *either*, *neither*, *every*, *few*, *much*, *no*, *none*. Some again, as *whole*, *certain*, *other*, are with more propriety ranked among the adjectives; and others as *ever* and *never*, are in reality adverbs.

#### VI. *Of the verb.*

The verb is, in all languages, the most artificial and the most difficult part of speech; because men have contrived to point out, in immediate connection with it, very different and multiplied relations. To denote these relations properly, in the various inflections of the verb, is called by grammarians, *to conjugate*

*conjugate.* The verbs are divided into different species, arising partly from their *Signification*, partly from their *use*, and partly also from their *conjugation*.

With respect to their *Signification*, they attribute something to an object, which can either be conceived immediately in it, and in this case they are called *intransitive*, sometimes too, but not very properly, *neuter* verbs; or they imply something that takes place externally to it, *transitive* verbs; when two self-subsistent things are required, the one of which is in an *active*, and the other in a *passive* state. On this account, in many languages, the *transitive* verbs have two different forms; namely the *active*, when the subject is in an *active* state, and the *passive*, when it is suffering. The *reciprocal* verbs are true *transitives*, with this exception only, that the predicate is brought back to the subject, by means of a pronoun.

With respect to the *use*, the verbs are either *personal*, when their subject is determined, or *impersonal*, when it cannot be ascertained, and consequently is something unknown. Farther, they are either *perfect*, when they can be used in all the different relations, in which the predicate can be placed towards the subject; or *defective*, when they are used only in some of these relations.

With respect to the *conjugation*, the verbs are called *regular*, when all their relative states can be expressed conformably to one rule; or *irregular*, when they deviate from the established rule.

The relations, circumstances, and collateral notions, which mankind

mankind have contrived to express by the verb, are very numerous. The principal of them are as follows.

1. The *form* of the word, whether a verb is *transitive*, or *intransitive*; and in the former case, whether it is *active* or *passive*.
2. The *mood* or the manner, in which the predicate is stated concerning the subject. This may be done, a,) in a positive manner, implying truth and certainty; hence the *indicative mood*; b,) in an uncertain and doubtful manner, the *conjunctive*; c,) by way of command, the *imperative*; and d,) without any reference to the person, the *infinitive*.—The participle, which is sometimes considered as a peculiar mood, deserves no place here; since it is properly an adjective derived from the verb, and carrying with it the collateral idea of time.
3. The *time*, in which the predicate belongs to the subject. This strictly consists of three periods only, namely the *present*, *past*, and *future*; but as the two last are susceptible of a great variety of farther determinations, not indeed arising from their own nature, but from the various relations of speech, many languages express these in the verb itself; and thus the *past* time is again divided into three tenses, the *imperfect*, *perfect*, and *pluperfect*; in a similar manner the *future* is again resolved into several species.
4. The *number* of the persons of the subject; and lastly,
5. The *species* of the person itself, whether it is the first, second, or third.

To express all these circumstances and relations in the verb *itself*,

itself, agreeable to the method adopted in every language, is by grammarians called, *to conjugate*. Under this expression, however, we understand only this much, that all the relations, above stated, ought to be expressed by means of proper syllables of inflection, attached to the root of the verb itself; and in this process, the English language is remarkably simple and easy. It admits only of *one form* and *one gender*; for the *intransitive* verbs are likewise conjugated in the *active* form; in this there are only three *moods*, the *indicative*, the *imperative* and the *infinitive*: in the *indicative* we make use of two tenses, viz. the *present*, and a species of the past, the *imperfect*; but in the *imperative*, and *infinitive*, of one tense only: in both tenses of the *indicative*, there appear *two numbers*, and in each of these, *three persons*, which however can be only imperfectly marked by the verb itself; a deficiency, which renders the prefixing of the pronouns necessary.

To denote the remaining relations, the English are obliged to make use of circumlocution, or of indirect expressions furnished them by certain verbs, that generally indicate some collateral circumstances, and on this account are called *auxiliary words*; because they serve to express those relations, in the formation of which the English verbs are deficient. These then consist of the verbs, *to be*, for the *passive* form; *I may*, for the *conjunctive*; *to have*, for the *past*; and *I shall*, for the *future* tenses;—although several other auxiliary verbs are commonly enumerated. But, as the whole of this *periphrastical conjugation* has been formed merely upon the plan of the more complete Latin inflection of verbs, those above specified will answer

the present purpose; since any other method of conjugating verbs, if carried on by auxiliary words, is in every respect periphrastical.

I cannot here enter upon the extensive application and the use of these auxiliary words; and therefore I shall only observe, that the *transitive* verbs, in the German language, are divided into two classes, according as the ideas expressed by them partake more of the active or passive meaning. In the former case, they are accompanied by the auxiliary verb *haben*, “to have;” in the latter, by *seyn*, “to be;” v. g. *er bat geschlaufen*, “he has slept;” but in another instance, *er ist genesen*, “he is recovered.” This distinction, however, does not prevail in English, where all transitives are inflected by the auxiliary verb, *to have*, without attending to their signification.—*Regular* verbs are such as preserve the radical syllable unchanged, and in which the inflection is carried on, in an uniform manner, by means of fixed terminating syllables. *Irregular* verbs either deviate from the established syllable of inflection, or they frequently want it altogether; for instance, *I burst*; *imperf. I burst*; *participle, burst* or *bursten*; or the inflection takes place in the radical syllable itself; *I bleed*; *imperf. I bled*; *participle, bled*; or where both deviations occur in the same verb; *I beseech*; *imperf. I besought*; *partic. beseeched* or *besought*. The irregular verbs are, in all languages, the most ancient and the most original: in tracing the nature and origin of them, we must resort to the higher branches of etymology. In English we find the irregular verbs throughout derived from the *Saxo-Danish*, in which language they likewise

likewise appear in the irregular form ; as, on the other hand, the verbs formed from the French and Latin uniformly follow the regular inflection.

### VII. *Of the Particles.*

The particles furnish a subject of inquiry, that would be inconsistent with the limits of this Essay. They are throughout considered as adverbs ; since they denote either a circumstance in general, in which case the precise meaning of them results from those parts of speech, with which they are immediately connected ; or they point out a circumstance of itself, and independent of any other part of speech, in which situation they are called adverbs ; or they relate to particular kinds of circumstances : thus the *prepositions* denote the relation subsisting between two substantives, in which relation they have been placed by the verb ; as the *conjunctions* mark the relation between sentences and their members.—The last part of speech, with which grammarians conclude their task, comprises the *interjections*. They express the various sensations or emotions of the mind, simply as such, and may be divided according to the various kinds of these emotions. There are however some words, i. e. expressions of clear ideas, which are occasionally used to denote mere sensations ; for instance, “ O sad ! well a day ! ” and for this reason they cannot, with strict propriety, be called interjections.

*Conclusion.*

Since my intention, throughout the whole of this treatise, has been no other, but to shew in a cursory manner, that the English grammar is less arbitrary, and more susceptible of rational treatment, than many philologists imagine, I must content myself, for the present, with this short specimen.

If teachers and learners should gradually adopt this method of etymological reasoning, it will be easy to apply it to the syntax ; which, independently of this consideration, is much easier and more concise in English than in other languages ; because the words, in the former, are deprived of nearly the whole of their inflection. Indeed, by far the most essential business in the syntax consists, partly of a rational method of constructing the *series of words*, in which the English language much resembles the German ; partly of the proper use of the participles, which display many peculiarities in the construction of that language.

## ESSAY THIRD.

*On the relative merits and demerits of Johnson's  
English Dictionary.*

THE English are in possession of a very copious Dictionary of their language, with which the late DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON has presented them, and of which the fourth edition appeared (London, 1773) with some additions, in two large Folio Volumes, comprising upwards of thirty Alphabets, or 716 Sheets of letter-prefs \*.

As the completeness of this work, together with the critical and philosophic manner, which the author follows, has been frequently the subject of great praise, not only in England, but also in other countries, by recommending it as a model of a useful Dictionary for any language; I was induced to think, that an accurate abridgment of this work might of itself suffice, to supply so important a defect in German literature. Nor indeed had I directed my views further, when I resolved upon publishing an English-German Dictionary, designed chiefly for the use of my countrymen. But upon a more minute inquiry into the merits of Johnson's work, I very soon discovered, that this performance, notwithstanding the many advantages it possesses, is replete with great imperfections.

\* This computation is made from the first Edition, Lond. 1755.

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fections.—As these imperfections are of such a nature, as to exhibit themselves more remarkably in an abridgment, translated into German, than they perhaps do appear in the original; and as the principal utility, which the Germans expect from such an undertaking, might thus have been much diminished, I was obliged to submit to a more arduous task than I was, at first, inclined to undertake.

This assertion will not be considered as unjust, when I shall point out, individually, the principal requisites to a Dictionary, and remark upon every point, how far *Johnson* has performed his duty, and wherein *I* have endeavoured to improve upon him.

1. In the number of words.
2. In the value and dignity of every word, whether it be quite obsolete or current; and in the latter case, whether it is used in the more elevated, poetical, social, or vulgar style.
3. In the grammatical nature of the word, to which I also refer the orthography, the mark of the accent, and the pronunciation.
4. In the etymology or derivation.
5. In the decomposition of the principal idea denoted by the word;—either by means of a definition, or by a synonymous German word;—and in the analysis of the different significations.
6. In the illustration of words by examples; and,
7. In the grammatical combination, or the use of every word, with respect to the syntax.

Con-

Conformable to this division of the subject, I shall offer some remarks upon each of these particular points.

I. Concerning the number and the practical use of words, I expected to find the work of Johnson in its greatest perfection. In a book, consisting of 2864 pages, large folio, and four times reprinted, I hoped to meet with the whole treasure, or at least with the most necessary and current words, of the English language. But, in this respect, my disappointment was great; and those, who have consulted Johnson's Dictionary with the same view, will agree with me, that upon this very point he displays his weakest side. We must however do him the justice to allow, that with respect to terms of science, and written language, his work is very complete; but it is defective in social language, in the language of civil life, and in the terms of arts and manufactures. His defect in the last-mentioned branches, the author himself acknowledges in the preface, and makes this strange apology for it, "that he found it impossible to frequent the work-shops of mechanics, the mines, magazines, ship-yards, &c. in order to inquire into the different terms and phrases, which are peculiar to these pursuits." Yet this is a great desideratum to foreigners, and considerably detracts from the merit of a work of this nature; for these are the precise cases, in which they have most frequent occasion for consulting a Dictionary. To this head we may refer the names of plants, fishes, birds, and insects, frequently occurring in common life, of which a great number are wanting in the work of Johnson; though this deficiency might have been most easily supplied, as there certainly

certainly is no want of botanical books and publications on Natural History, in the English language. In order to show the extent of this deficiency, in a particular instance, I shall only remark, that in the single work containing the last voyage of Capt. Cook, in two moderate volumes, octavo, (published 1782) there occur nearly one hundred words, relating partly to navigation, partly to Natural History, that cannot be found in Johnson's or other Dictionaries.

It will be admitted, that a dictionary of a language ought to possess the greatest possible degree of completeness, particularly with respect to names and technical terms, which are more rarely employed in common language, and the meaning of which cannot be conjectured from the context. As such words frequently become an object of research, I have found myself under the disagreeable necessity of filling up these chasms, as far as my time, my plan, and my sources of information would admit. Thus I have increased the stock of words, occurring in Johnson's and other English Dictionaries of distinguished merit, with a great number (perhaps several thousands) of words which were wanting; especially such as concern the objects of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, of the English constitution, and of various other departments. With regard to the laws, manners, and customs of England, I have availed myself of the well known work of Entick.

The proper names of countries, places, and persons, when deviating from the genuine orthography, I have likewise more correctly stated, and added such as have been omitted in Johnson's and other dictionaries.

For the improvement of terms in social language, I am much

much indebted to Boyer's English and French Dictionary. But as I had, in this respect, placed more confidence in Johnson than I could justify after a careful examination of his work; and as, on this account, I did not bestow the portion of time requisite to a close comparison with other Dictionaries, I readily confess, that there remains much to be done yet, especially with the assistance of the latest English productions in the department of Belles Lettres. For, in latter times, the English language appears to have undergone the same changes as the French and German.

II. It is well known, that all the words of a language do not possess an equal value or degree of currency: some of them are entirely obsolete, but still occur in writings, which are studied in modern times, for instance, in the translation of the Bible, in Shakespeare, Spencer, &c.; others are peculiar to poetical language; again, others are current only in certain provinces, or in particular situations of life; and still others are vulgar, and exploded from the more dignified written style, as well as from the polite circles of conversation. It is one of Johnson's great merits, that he has carefully attended to this distinction; I have likewise marked it, in my English and German Dictionary, with equal attention; and I have pointed out the most necessary of these distinctions, by means of particular signs or characters.

III. Next to the preceding, I consider the grammatical designation of every word as the most important part of a good Dictionary: and under this head I place not only the orthography, the accentuation, and pronunciation, but also the classification of a word, to whatever class it belongs as a part of

speech, and finally, its inflection ; whether it be regularly or irregularly declined or conjugated. Upon this point, also, Johnson is in most instances very correct ; excepting that he does not always distinguish the substantive from the adverb, and this again from the adjective ; an imperfection which, with the aid of some general ideas of grammar, I have had no great difficulty to remedy.—In the spelling of words, Johnson has adopted the method prevalent among all sensible people, and consigned the orthographic disputes to those, who, from want of more important knowledge, have no other means of obtaining reputation. For my part, I saw no reason for differing from Johnson on this head.—The proper accentuation is, in the English language, one of the most difficult points. The causes of this difficulty must be obvious from the remarks upon the accent, which I have premised in the second Essay. The greater number of English Dictionaries, therefore, have considered it as necessary, to mark that syllable, which is accentuated in a word. Nevertheless, they have committed the common error, that the reader is never certain, whether an accentuated syllable must be pronounced with the grave, i. e. extended, or acute, i. e. short tone of the voice ; for instance, *blood* and *room*, are marked with the same accent ; though the former be pronounced short, and the latter long. In this matter I have followed Johnson, nearly as far as the middle of the letter A ; but as the true pronunciation is thus very imperfectly marked ; and as I was successful enough to discover this common error, I began very early to differ from him and his colleagues ; and, consequently, from the middle of the first letter, I have  
endeav-

endeavoured to distinguish carefully the *length* of an accentuated syllable by a mark drawn from the left towards the right, and the *shortness* of it by a mark running from the right towards the left.—In the remaining part of grammatical determinations of words, I have followed Johnson as my guide; and carefully distinguished the neuter from the *active* form of verbs: though, in a few instances, I have been induced to differ from him, when he had mistaken the neutral use of an active verb for a neuter verb.

IV. The proximate derivation of a word is a matter of importance in all languages; for upon this circumstance depends not only the full idea or intelligibility of words, but likewise their orthography. Johnson has sensibly perceived this difficulty; and consequently has shortly pointed out the immediate derivatives, “in cases where he was acquainted with them;” and I must add, “that he has done it in such a manner as appeared to him the most proper.” For, upon this particular head, his Dictionary is very defective. When an English word is derived from the French or Latin, he does not easily mistake its proximate root: in words, that are obvious derivatives of familiar Anglo-Saxon terms, he is equally successful. But in most other cases, he proves himself a shallow etymologist: and as his own notions of the origin of languages were not very clear, he is frequently led into great errors. Thus he considers the words, with whose origin he is unacquainted, either as *fortuitous* and *cant words*; or he derives them frequently in the absurdest manner from words nearly corresponding in sound, while he aims at explaining them in three

or four different ways ; for instance, “ to *cbirp*,” derived from, “ to chear up, to make cheerful, &c.” yet this word obviously comes from the vernacular German, *tſcbirpen* or *zirpen*, “ to twitter like birds.” This may serve as a specimen of the manner, in which he searches for the source of one river in the mouth of another, which is altogether different from the former. Here I have had frequent opportunities of correcting him ; particularly as SKINNER was his principal hero in etymology, and as Johnson himself was unacquainted with the German and other languages related to it. But in cases, where the derivation of a word required laborious researches, such as would have occupied much room to little purpose, I have rather passed it over altogether, because the like words are generally considered as radicals, or as proper names. And as the object expressed by a word of this kind must be represented by a sensible exhibition of the thing itself, the method of rendering it intelligible, by a probable derivation, is but a negative advantage ; though the etymology of it might be established by a far-fetched analogy with other words.

Upon this occasion, I cannot omit mentioning a circumstance of some importance to the philosophic inquirer into the structure of languages. There are, in English, as well as in all other languages, a great number of words, which are pronounced and written perfectly analogous to one another ; although it can be proved, that they are derived from very different roots. Such are, for instance, the German words, *Bär*, *Boek*, *Hund*, *Katze*, &c. and the English words, “ arm, buxom, eack, &c.” To consider words of the same found as of com-

mon origin, and to treat them as such, discovers a very superficial knowledge in languages: besides, this method is attended with the singular effect of misleading the ignorant, who form the strangest combinations of ideas, when they attempt to derive the different significations and applications of a word from *one* common root. Johnson was aware of this impropriety, but he has not always been successful enough in obviating it. Hence we frequently meet with such a number of significations crowded upon the same word, that it is a matter of astonishment, how they happened to meet under the same head. For this reason, I have separated the different significations of monotonous words by means of numbers; and have endeavoured to shew the derivation of each, when I was enabled to do this in a satisfactory manner.

V. To ascertain the principal and peculiar signification of a word, from which the others, if there be any, must be derived, has been my next employment. This, indeed, is always the most difficult point in a Dictionary; a point, which not only presupposes correct ideas of the origin of Languages, but also the most precise knowledge of every word, and of its use from the earliest periods. The whole of this knowledge must be founded upon a sufficient number of works, written by men who lived in the different ages, in which the language was spoken. But as we possess no such number of works in any language, as is sufficient to make us acquainted with all the words, that are or have been current in it; it may be easily conjectured, that the primitive signification of every word cannot be pointed out with precision. But even in cases

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where this is possible, it requires the most careful examination of all the ancient monuments of a language, that are still preserved, together with much found philosophy, in order to avoid falling into dreams and fancies, and deriving, in an arbitrary manner, the words from one another. In etymology, as soon as it carried him beyond the proximate derivation of a word, my predecessor has not been very successful. For, even in the latter case, he relied too much upon the authority of others ; and it evidently appears from his Dictionary, that the structure of language did not induce him to philosophical inquiries. On this account, we can form no great expectations, and we must be satisfied with his classification of the different meanings of words, so as they in every instance appeared to him most proper. His want of knowledge in etymology, however, is attended with this advantage, that it has guarded him against a thousand follies, to which the pseudo-etymologists, of all languages and climates, are very liable.

As a foreigner, I could not easily remedy this deficiency in the classification of words, unless it had been my inclination to proceed upon arbitrary principles, which ought not to be introduced into the philosophy of language. Yet I have corrected another, perhaps more important, error: Johnson is uncommonly liberal with a variety of significations, particularly in such words as are frequently used ; for in these, the significations pointed out by him, are almost endless. Thus he has given *seventy* different significations of the verb, *to go* ; *sixty-nine* of the verb, *to stand* ; &c. and he might, without great difficulty, have produced the double of that number, if he

he had proceeded upon a similar plan.—In these verbs, as well as in many hundred other cases, Johnson has obviously and uniformly confounded the various applications of one and the same meaning, with the different significations themselves. Hence I found it necessary, to reduce many of his significations to one general idea, and thus to save the reader the trouble of searching for the accurate idea of the word in question among a number of similar ideas, and of frequently missing the true meaning of the word altogether. In order to perceive this inconvenience, I request the reader to compare with one another the words, *ground*, *form*, and many others of a similar tendency.

It is a very common practice among the compilers of Dictionaries, to point out the signification of a word, by means of a synonymous expression used in another language. A small share of correct philological knowledge must convince every one of the impropriety and disadvantage of this practice. There are no words completely synonymous in any language; nor can any two words, from different languages, be considered as synonymous. And although in languages, that bear strong marks of affinity to one another, there should be two words of common origin, or even radically the same; such as “*ground*” with the German *Grund*; “*to go*,” with the German *geben*; they still deviate in the indirect significations, or, at least, in the application to individual cases. The safest and most rational method, therefore, is to resolve every signification into other words, or to give a clear and, if possible, concise definition of it. I am sensible, that in this manner the idea of a word can-  
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not be exhausted, nor is it possible to point out this idea with all its shades and subtle modifications. I further admit, that this developement of the idea is not in all instances practicable ; since the meaning of a word, in many cases, is so obscure that it cannot be made perspicuous. Yet, at the same time, where this expedient is applicable, it affords the most certain method of exhibiting a competent notion of every word and its significations ; while it serves to promote a clear and just knowledge of things in general. This, therefore, is one of the most important advantages of Johnson's Dictionary : for the author possessed a very happy talent of displaying the idea of a word in a concise, intelligible, and pertinent manner. In this respect, I have throughout followed him as my guide, except where I was obliged to contrast the significations of words, which he had unnecessarily accumulated, and consequently to search for an appropriate and more comprehensive idea.

Johnson has not avoided the common error of lexicographers, who have either neglected to state the names of plants and animals, or have done it in a very vague and undetermined manner. He commonly dismisses the names of vegetables with the addition, "*a plant.*" Thus he forsakes the reader, where a guide is most anxiously looked for. I have endeavoured to supply this deficiency, by adding a number of names from the three kingdoms of nature, together with the systematic name of Linnaeus, to every plant, in order to prevent any mistakes. As the Germans, according to the different provinces, make use of a variety of names for one and the same plant, the addition of the Linnean name was indispensable. It is now to be hoped, that

that none of their numerous translators from the English, will, in future, be induced to translate the word "pine-apple," *ananas*, by the German expressions " *Tannzapfen*, or *Fichtenzapfel*," which signify the respective productions of the fir- and pine-trees; *Abies*, and *Pinus Lin.*; while the pine-apple is the produce of the *Bromelia Ananas Lin.* Such mistakes have been frequently committed in German books on gardening; and, in the imperfect state of the English-German Dictionaries hitherto published, it was not an easy matter to avoid them.

VI. In order to supply the imperfect definitions of words, the signification of which cannot be fully collected from the notion contained in the definition, it is a necessary point in a Dictionary, to illustrate them by examples. From these illustrations, this additional advantage results, that the grammatical use of a word, and its combination with other parts of speech, can be rendered more conspicuous. Johnson is very liberal with his examples, and not unfrequently prodigal to excels. The greater number of them, he has extracted from poetical works, as he had employed much of his time in publishing the English poets. I have made it my study, to hold a middle course, and to select from the rich store of Johnson's examples the most concise and pertinent, especially in such cases as appeared to require an example, to show the precise meaning or the grammatical use of a word. As, however, his examples and the whole stock of his words principally relate to the language of authors or "written language;" I have endeavoured to supply the obvious want of examples for the

purposes of social life, from the above quoted English and French Dictionary, by BOYER; a work, the phrases and exemplifications of which are principally of the latter kind.

VII. Concerning the practical application of words, when in connexion with others, Johnson has bestowed great attention upon the most important cases, in which every word may occur. His accuracy in this respect has induced me to adopt his examples, without attempting to change or improve them.

To conclude this account, I shall add some remarks, which exclusively concern the publication of my own Dictionary.—It is a common error of the most, if not of all, Dictionaries which appear with German explanations, that the authors of them not only pay no attention whatever to the propriety and dignity of the German expressions and phrases, but likewise that they are very studious to find the most absurd and vulgar words in the German, and to make use of them for the illustration of foreign words; though the latter should not hold out the least inducement to this outrage. The injury thus occasioned to inexperienced students of languages, who most frequently stand in need of such books, is much greater than is commonly imagined; because their taste or intellectual discernment is thereby for ever depraved. And what must be the ideas of foreigners, respecting the German (as they cannot avoid making use of such books), when they discover in them the essence of all that is obscene and vulgar, instead of the more polished language of authors? What must an Englishman think of us, when he finds in our English German Dictionaries, “gormandizer” translated *Sauvagen*; “to gormandize,”

dize," *ein Saumagen seyn*, "gangrel," *ein grosse lange Strunze*. Similar indecencies occur in every page. A small degree of common sense would have prevented the insertion of this trash into our Dictionaries, while it would have taught the compilers, to render the expression with becoming dignity. I have exerted myself to shun the like inelegant terms and phrases, even in those cases where the English word might have afforded an opportunity of using them; for I have rather submitted to the task of circumlocution, than to the propagation of mean and indecent words.

There is another remark to be made, relative to the orthography of the English. Johnson has given a separate analysis of every compound word, after having first printed the words in a combined state. In order to save room and trouble, I have thought proper to point out the compound words immediately in the order of the alphabet. For this purpose I have almost throughout the whole (for in some instances I may have overlooked it) divided such words in the spelling, as "hopeless, black-smith, &c. though these words should be read and considered as inseparable \*.

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\* This method of pointing out compounded words is professedly contrived to save room and the repetition of words; yet, at the same time, it is unavoidably attended with this disadvantage, that it may induce foreigners, to consider *all* those words, which are printed with a sign of division, as separable compounds.—Mr. Adelung might have easily obviated this inconvenience, by using different marks of separation for those compounds, the parts of which are written separately, as "party-man;" and for those, that are contracted into one word, as "spite-ful."

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The following Extract from a Critical Essay originally published in the Edinburgh Review for 1755, will, it is hoped, be acceptable to the reader; as the ideas contained in it very nearly coincide with those advanced by MR. ADELUNG; and as it is now understood to be the production of the celebrated DR. ADAM SMITH.

‘A Dictionary of the English language, however useful, or rather necessary, has never been hitherto attempted with the least degree of success. To explain hard words and terms of art, seems to have been the chief purpose of all the former compositions, which have borne the title of English dictionaries. Mr Johnson has extended his views much farther, and has made a very full collection of all the different meanings of each English word, justified by examples from authors of good reputation. When we compare this book with other dictionaries, the merit of its author appears very extraordinary. Those which in modern languages have gained the most esteem, are that of the French academy, and that of the academy Della Crusca. Both these were composed by a numerous society of learned men, and took up a longer time in the composition, than the life of a single person could well have afforded. The Dictionary of the English language is the work of a single person, and composed in a period of time very inconsiderable, when compared with the extent of the work. The collection of words appears to be very accurate, and must be allowed to be very ample. Most words, we believe, are to be found in the Dictionary, that ever were almost suspected to be English; but we cannot help wishing, that the author had trusted less to the judgment of those who may consult him, and had oftener passed his own censure upon those words which are not of approved use, though sometimes to be met

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with in authors of no mean name.—Where a work is admitted to be highly useful, and the execution of it intitled to praise ; the adding, that it might have been more useful, can scarcely, we hope, be deemed a censure of it. The merit of this Dictionary is so great, that it cannot detract from it, to take notice of some defects, the supplying which, would, in our judgment, add a considerable share of merit to that which it already possesses. These defects consist chiefly in the plan, which appears to us not to be sufficiently grammatical. The different significations of a word are indeed collected ; but they are seldom digested into several classes, or ranged under the meaning which the word principally expresses ; and sufficient care has not been taken to distinguish the words apparently synonymous. ’

’ It can import no reflection upon Mr. Johnson’s Dictionary, that the subject has been viewed in a different light by others ; and it is at least a matter of curiosity to consider the different views, in which it appears. Any man who is about to compose a dictionary, or rather a grammar of the English language, must acknowledge himself indebted to Mr. J. for abridging at least one half of his labour. All those who are under any difficulty, with respect to a particular word or phrase, are in the same situation. The Dictionary presents them a full collection of examples ; from whence indeed they are left to determine ; but by which the determination is rendered easy. In this country \*, the usefulness of it will be soon felt, as there is no standard of correct language in conversation. If our recommendation could in any degree incite

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to the perusal of it, we would earnestly recommend it to all those who are desirous to improve and correct their language, frequently to consult the Dictionary. Its merits must be determined by the frequent report, that is had to it. This is the most unerring test of its value: criticisms may be false, private judgments ill-founded; but if a work of this nature be much in use, it has received the sanction of the public approbation.

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